

PC GAMES NIRVANA

FULL REVIEW INSIDE

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WARGASM

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WARGASM
NHL '99
ACTUA TENNIS



FULL DEFINITIVE REVIEW

HALF-LIFE

OVER 40 GAMES REVIEWED

FIFA 99

KING'S QUEST VIII

GANGSTERS

SHOGO: MAD

RAILROAD TYCOON 2

FALLOUT 2

FLIGHT SIM HEAD TO HEAD

COMBAT FLIGHT SIM v

EUROPEAN AIR WAR



WHAT'S ON THE
COVER
DISC?
FULL DETAILS PAGE 194

APPLIES TO CD VERSION ONLY
IF YOUR COVERMOUNT IS MISSING
PLEASE CONSULT YOUR NEWSAGENT

TINY COMPO: The creators of Wargasm
had a state of the art flight sim reviewed last
issue - name that game. First out of the hat wins
a mystery prize - full details on page 7...

**PLUS! CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 3 • TOTAL ANNIHILATION: KINGDOMS
QUEST FOR GLORY V • TUROK 2 • MICHAEL OWEN'S WORLD LEAGUE SOCCER 99 • TOP GUN 2**

£2.99 XMAS 1998 PCZ#71



None of us lives for himself only
None of us dies for himself only

ROMANS 14,7



You're about to experience a Heretic revelation like no other.
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The Beauty of the Heretic Universe
Famed developer, Raven, does what
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civilisations that are, in one word:
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Actual game play screenshots



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Surrender to insanely fast-paced
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sive third-person perspective.
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Heretic, wield magical powers, cast
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perform instinctive moves, such as
unprecedented climbing, gymnastic
and acrobatic manouvers.

HERETIC II



WELCOME
TO YOUR NEW
RELIGION



COME

ON

WHAT'S ON YOUR HARD DRIVE?

PC ZONE hits the streets to find out who's playing what, and meets some weirdoes and amateur comedians

★ WORDS/PHOTOS Andrew Martin



'HOT BANANA'
31, safe cracker

Is your hard drive as weird as you?

"Its serial number is 1 6C TOY."

Er, okay. So what's on it?

"A beta version of MS Office 2000, Tomb Raider III, lots of pictures you hear about being available on the Internet, C&C, Dune 2000... By the way, did you know there's life on Uranus?"



DAVE NEWBURY
29, mechanic

What's in your department store grotto?

"At the moment, nothing. I only got it yesterday."

Ah, so what do you want this Christmas?

"A good hot curry, lots of bitter, that Klingon game, that FIFA one, the one with tanks and armies in it, a Microsoft pad to play games with, and the love of a good woman."



ANGIE 'WATTS' RILEY
25, artist

Is there room at your inn (hard drive)?

"No, it's fully occupied by Casino Strip Poker, Virtual Valerie, Creatures and Catz."

All you want for Christmas is?

"A bouncing healthy baby with absolutely no pain, a nice long holiday, and annoying men to stop commenting on the size of my baubles. Carmageddon II would be nice as well."



ANTHONY COOPER
34, bookmaker

What's on your birth-of-Christ hard drive?

"FIFA World Cup, Quake II, International Cricket Captain."

All you want for Christmas is?

"A top-quality 3D card horse racing simulation, Carmageddon II, first place for every outsider with no backers, International Cricket Captain and a Dukla Prague away kit."



MATT 'EMULSION' PERRY
22, sales executive

What's in your little town of Bethlehem?

"World Cup 98, Freddie The Fish, Blobby 65."

Very droll. And all you want for Christmas is?

"A Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle, a Scalextric, a Subbuteo, a Cabbage Patch Kid, a Buzz Lightyear, a Teletubby and my own pub."



KEITH 'WINGNUT' FORMBY
33, window cleaner

What's in your barn?

"Drivers for graphics and sound cards etc. And Leisure Suit Larry."

Quick, call the nurse... What about for Christmas?

"An Amiga and a PCW 2940. Or emulators for both. And Carmageddon II."

Ever considered a career in comedy?

"No."

Don't.



TERRY O'HALLERAN
34, landscape gardener

What's on your Christmas special hard drive?

"C&C, SimCity 2000, Commandos."

What do you want in your stocking?

A 3Dfx card, Unreal, Quake II, Dune 2000, whiskey, cigs, ten nymphomaniacs, Viagra, and a day off. In that order."



LEE ATKINS
26, joiner

Your hard drive - does it offer gold, Frankenstein and grrr?

"No, just Pretty Good Solitaire, Quake II, Unreal, Blade Runner."

All you want for Christmas is?

"A new mouse, because I've knackered my old one playing Quake II, Half-Life, Dune 2000, Carmageddon II and Klingon: Honour Guard, and a bottomless mutant tin of Quality Street and Cadbury's Roses."



RUTH MEGGITT
17, student

What's on your Christmas hard drive?

"StreetFighter, Dune 2000 and an SNES emulator."

All you want for Christmas is?

"A new T-shirt, a Voodoo2 card with unlimited memory, Carmageddon II, a part in Coronation Street as a battleaxe barmaid, and to pass my driving test. It'll be a long letter to Father Christmas."



PETE WOODRUFF
31, accountant

What's strapped to your donkey's back?

"GTA, Dune 2000, C&C, FIFA World Cup, International Cricket Captain."

What would you like to be hung from your tree this Christmas?

"A 3D card, a 19-inch monitor, a PCTV card, some memory, Windows 98, a laser printer, a Slinky, a Super Simon, Ker-Plunk and Vanessa Feltz. What a great Christmas that would be."

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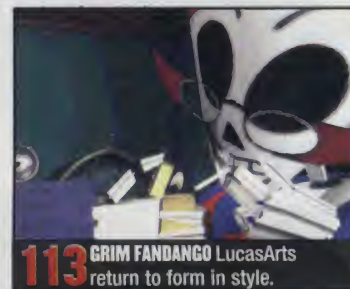
56 TOTAL ANNIHILATION: KINGDOMS
More than just TA with swords.



88 HALF-LIFE Stretching the *Quake* engine to its limit, what we have here is a game that is gonna blow people away. Is it good? It's the game of the year. Fact.



108 FIFA 99 Football games don't come any better than this.



113 GRIM FANDANGO LucasArts return to form in style.

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The 3D adventure has arrived.



“Combines the stunning visuals of a high-end sim with the instant playability of an arcade game”

72 OBSESSED WITH LEVEL DESIGN

One man's life of construction.



ON THE CD



FULL DETAILS PAGE 194

That silvery thing on the cover is loaded with great demos, patches and helpful files guaranteed to ensure you get more out of your PC

DON'T MISS DEMOS OF...

WARGASM
TOMB RAIDER 3
TOP GUN: HORNET'S NEST
POPULOUS: THE BEGINNING
RAILROAD TYCOON II
TIGER WOODS 99
ENEMY INFESTATION
MICROSOFT PINBALL ARCADE
DELTA FORCE
AGE OF EMPIRES: THE RISE OF ROME

PLUS

Sexy new screenshots
 The latest CompuServe and mIRC software

Tons of new patches and... oh, just go to page 194 and see



WIN THE
**TOP 10
 PC GAMES**
 SEE THE PC ZONE CHARTS
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Quite literally the most definitive games news section in the universe

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A former ZONE reader's obsession led to him working on one of the greatest games ever produced

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Are you 'ard enough to write in?

➔ The wheel deal. Check out our look at driving wheels reviews on page 154.



WIN!

THE COMPO NO ONE FINDS Correctly answer this month's cover question and you could win a box full of PC goodies. Send your entry on the back of a postcard addressed to: **The Compo No One Finds (71), PC ZONE, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7JL.** The first entry with the correct answer plucked out of the hat wins a mystery prize. The Ed's decision is final. Closing date: Wednesday 25 November. The winner of our November cover compo was Innes Clatworthy from Theydon Bois, Essex, who correctly named the guy on that issue's cover as Max Damage, and wins a Saitek X36 Flight Controller... Whoo!

WE'RE THE NATION'S NUMBER ONE

Welcome to our Christmas issue of *PC ZONE*. Those of you who have been with us for a while will know we've undergone many changes over the last eight months. With a reduced cover price, more editorial pages, the best cover CD money can buy, a fantastic set of writers and more exclusives than you can shake a big stick at, we're pretty certain we've got it right. And you seem to think we've got it right too. Over the last few months we've seen our sales figures rocket, making us the best-selling PC games magazine in the UK. But this month we've had even greater praise.

I loathe blowing our own trumpet, but I've got to tell you about a recent review of *PC ZONE* which filled us all with a warm glow (and no, we hadn't wet ourselves). I've got no excuse for telling

you about it, other than to reassure you that you're buying the best PC games magazine on the market.

As some of you may know, *CTW* is the industry paper aimed at everyone working in the games industry. In its October 26 edition, it conducted a round-up of all PC games magazines and showered us with praise. I quote: "*PC ZONE* is an explosion of ideas, presented in a chaotic, energetic visual style that gives the impression the staff just can't cram everything they want into the space available... The tone is irreverent and knockabout, but inclusive and friendly, and the standard of writing unrivalled... This loving care and attention is lavished on every single section of the magazine – you'll even want to read the hardware reviews." The article closes with the comment: "A proper magazine, except it's about PC games. Tremendous."

We couldn't have received more glowing praise if we'd written it ourselves. In fact, if we had written it ourselves we'd probably have had to tone it down. Incidentally, *PC Gamer* received the comment: "You'll be unlikely to get through an issue without at least once wishing someone would lock them all in a room with nothing to read but the *Daily Star* for a week." For those of you who've ever coughed up £4.99 for a double-CD issue of *Gamer*, bear this final quote in mind: "Curiously, the mags with two cover CDs both had fewer game demos in total than the mags with just one."

On that note, we're taking our swollen heads off down the boozer for a celebratory piss-up. See you back here next month for an even better issue, out Tuesday 15 December.

All the best,
Mark Higham, Editor-in-Chief

MEET THE ZONE TEAM

All *PC ZONE*'s reviewers are experts in their field. We like to give every game that comes in for review the best chance, which is why we give it to a reviewer who's a fan of the genre



Jeremy Wells

What's on your hard drive? *Championship Manager 3*, *F1 Monaco Racing Simulation*, *FIFA 99*
Best games ever: *Championship Manager 3*, *Age Of Empires* and *FIFA 99*
Favourite genres: Sports and racing
What are you expecting from Santa: I don't believe in Santa



Chris Anderson

What's on your hard drive? *Populous 3*, *Klinton: Honour Guard* (which doesn't work), *Caesar III*
Best games ever: *Half-Life*, *X-COM Apocalypse*, *Final Fantasy VII* (PSX), *Ultima VII* and *Midwinter*
Favourite genres: RPGs, strategy and adventure
What are you expecting from Santa: *Half-Life*, lager and some pies



Paul Mallinson

What's on your hard drive? *Half-Life*, *SIN*
Best games ever: *Resident Evil II*, *Super Tennis* (SNES), *Quake II* and *Half-Life*
Favourite genres: Real-time 3D action adventures
What are you expecting from Santa: An ounce of Super Skunk or lots of sleep



Richie Shoemaker

What's on your hard drive? *Half-Life*, *Shogo*, *SIN*
Best games ever: *Elite* (BBC) and *Half-Life*
Favourite genres: Real-time strategy and 3D shoot 'em ups
What are you expecting from Santa: Musical socks



Steve Hill

What's on your hard drive? *Half-Life*, *Grim Fandango*, *ISS 98* (N64)
Best games ever: *Sensible World Of Soccer*, *ISS 98* (N64) and *Manic Miner* (Spectrum)
Favourite genres: Football, driving and 3D shoot 'em ups
What are you expecting from Santa: Nothing – as usual



Charlie Brooker

What's on your hard drive? *WarGasm*, *Fallout 2*, *Carmageddon II* demo
Best games ever: *Quake II*, *Puzzle Bobble* and *Tekken 3* (PSX)
Favourite genres: Action, strategy and point-and-click adventures
What are you expecting from Santa: A big bucketful of piss



Paul Presley

What's on your hard drive? *Rainbow Six*, *King's Quest VIII: Mask Of Eternity*, *Total Air War*
Best games ever: *Minder* (Spectrum), *Ultima IV* and *The Secret Of Monkey Island*
Favourite genres: RPGs, adventures and flight sims – and anything that's good
What are you expecting from Santa: Profound disappointment



Keith Pullin

What's on your hard drive? *Grim Fandango*, *Populous 3*
Best games ever: *Sensible World Of Soccer*, *Starquake* (Spectrum), *ISS64* (N64)
Favourite genres: Strategy and sport
What are you expecting from Santa: A big roast dinner with all the trimmings



Adam Phillips

What's on your hard drive? *Commandos*, *Carmageddon II* demo
Best games ever: *Little Big Adventure 1 & 2*, *Syndicate Wars*, *GoldenEye* (N64) and *Mario 64*
Favourite genres: *Quake* clones, driving games (with a twist), RTS and adventures
What are you expecting from Santa: An Alpha Romeo GTV V6 (fat soddin' chance)



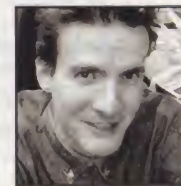
David McCandless

What's on your hard drive? Nothing
Best games ever: *Ultima Underworld*, *Doom* and *Half-Life*
Favourite genres: 3D shooters
What are you expecting from Santa: A load of assorted nuts in a net bag



Warren Chrismas

What's on your hard drive? *Half-Life*, *Populous: The Beginning*, *Madden NFL 99*, *Acid*
Best games ever: *Tetris* (Gameboy), *CM2* and *ISS 98* (N64)
Favourite genres: Football and other sports titles, driving sims and real-time strategy games
What are you expecting from Santa: A wonderful 6' 1" girl called Claire



Phil Wand

What's on your hard drive? *Need For Speed III*, *Total Anal Lotion*, *Transport Tycoon Deluxe*
Best games ever: *Doom*, *TA* and *Satellite Warrior* (CPC 464)
Favourite genres: Real-time strategy and driving
What are you expecting from Santa: A Ducati 916SPS and some underpants

PCZONE

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WIN! Which developer is behind the benchmark 3D shooter *Half-Life*? Send entries on the back of a postcard to: I've read the small print, *PC ZONE* (71), 19 Bolsover Street, London, W1P 7HJ by Friday 27 November. Winner and prize announced same place next issue. Tom Munn from Herts wins the *ZONE* grab bag of goodies from last month's compo.

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Thursdays 1.30pm – 5.30pm only

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15 December. Don't miss it



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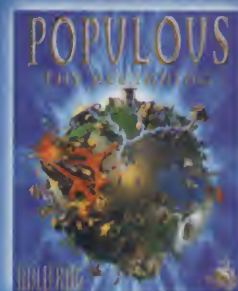
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"Lara's back and looking better than ever."

PC Zone

"Bigger, faster and more challenging than either of the previous games... the new Tomb Raider is the best of the lot."

Ultimate PC

"Tomb Raider III will be absolutely brilliant... might just be the best Raider yet."

Official PlayStation Magazine

"Lara Croft shoots for a Hat Trick and scores."

Play

"Tomb Raider III more than matches up to the previous efforts and could even turn out to be THE Tomb Raider."

PlayStation Power

It's
to
but
h
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TOMB RAIDER III

ADVENTURES OF LARA CROFT™

Hard
to believe
just get
ter and
better

Lara is back in Tomb Raider III and she just gets better and better.

Is it due to her new weapons and vehicles?

Or the challenges she faces
in new locations?

It may be her new outfits and
the moves she's learned?

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EIDOS

MAILBOX

Are men better than women at virtual reality videogames? Is there too much stuff on *Quake* in *PC ZONE*? And a revealing exposé claims that Persians don't necessarily wear turbans

★ ANSWERED BY Chris Anderson

LETTER OF THE MONTH

NOT EVERYONE WANTS MULTIPLAY

I see there is still a lot of consternation about the success of *International Cricket Captain*. I would say it is fairly simple to understand. There are footie games aplenty, both action and strategy, so they have to be of a very high standard to sell nowadays, whereas cricket games up to now have been absolutely crap.

I have been gaming for a long time, and *ICC*, although not great, does offer a fair bit of enjoyment and longevity to a cricket fan. Hopefully Empire will build on this and release a far better game by including things that should be in the original game, and improving on the graphics, sound etc. All of us who play it don't think it's perfect, but it's all we've got at the moment.

Just a general point, but more and more games seem to be aimed at the 'multiplayer' market, and I think this is leading to a decline in the standard of the games for the single player. I have toyed around with this type of gaming, and although it is excellent there is a fair chance of divorce due to bills etc. My main pleasure still comes from sitting in front of my PC frantically trying turn the tide of battle, score the winning runs/goal, complete just one more level, or whatever. I'm not saying that multiplayer games should not be there, but they should be an extension of a great single-player game, not an excuse for lazy programming.

John Owens

★ A good letter, with some very valid points. We can't see the attraction of *ICC* ourselves, but we accept that it definitely fills a gap in the market. And you're right, many developers are churning out games (particularly 3D shooters) that are geared towards multiplayer gaming. Invariably, the single-player missions in these titles are rubbish, but this is mainly because they're made in the USA, where multiplayer gaming is more commonplace. For the record, *PC ZONE* recognises that many UK gamers don't have access to a network or can't afford to play online, and we hope the importance of a game's strengths in single-player mode comes across in our reviews.

LOADS A GOODIES WINNER!



ICC: no classic, but cricket fans are grateful for it nonetheless.

CONTACT INFO

If your letter is selected as Letter of the Month we'll send you some promotional goodies, a game and maybe even some hardware!

WRITE TO Mailbox, *PC ZONE*, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ

EMAIL letters.pczone@dennis.co.uk

CHAT FORUM If you've got something pressing to say, check out the 'lively' chat forum on our website. Point your browser at www.pczone.co.uk for further info

MAN IN FRAGILE EGO SHOCK

I feel I have to respond to Julia Knight's comments in issue 70. Firstly, *Tetris* requires no brain power as it is a test of spacial awareness, something men are far better at than women.

Secondly my six-year-old son is currently working his way through *The Deeper Dungeons DK* expansion pack, as he completed the game unaided about two months ago. Let's not confuse games of any sort as anything other than a test of persistence. I have yet to come across a game that couldn't be beaten by anyone willing to play it for long enough. The real reason that more women don't play *Quake* and the like is that they simply don't find it as appealing as men do. As for "women like their games to be a bit taxing", try a busy *Quake* server, Julia. Play it for ten minutes then come back and tell us it's not taxing!

Dave Willis

★ Are men better than women at videogames? Who knows. Does anybody care? Probably not. Hope that helps.

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER?

Why have many of the games I have tried to purchase in the

last year been unavailable for up to three months? For instance, the release date for *Worms 2* (which is much better than you rate it) was September, but I had to wait until Christmas before I could get my hands on a copy. Also, the recent (and bloody great) *Motorcross Madness*, reported to be up for sale by late August/September, was only in my local stores a week ago. Is it down to a shitty PR system, a lousy branch of HMV, or are the big-bastard companies just working up a frenzy of excitement for their long-awaited titles?

Ambient Cow

★ We can only give you the release dates the developers give us and hope they stick to it. Unfortunately, they often set themselves unrealistic deadlines and find themselves struggling when they get near the release date. Ultimately, we would rather they kept working on their games until they got them right, rather than release bugged code, so in that respect they can be forgiven.

SHOULDER TIPS

At first when I saw your magazine saying that it "costs less than any other PC games monthly", I thought it would lack quality due to the reduced price. Not so! I realise that I was paying over the odds for my previous magazine and have cancelled that subscription in preference for yours. The main reason, apart from the price, is the atmosphere *PC ZONE* creates. You feel as though you are one of the lads having a gas down the pub, not getting talked down to as if you were in a stuffy classroom. It reminds me of the days when I read *Your Sinclair*. Keep up the good work and give yourself a pat on the back - just don't dislocate your shoulder.

Callum Stoner

★ Thanks, Callum. And we'll, er, try not to dislocate our shoulders.

HE DOESN'T WEAR A TURBAN

I am a happy regular reader of your wonderful magazine. Well, I was happy until I read issue 66, and issue 69. Why? Because of the

SHORT BUT SWEET

Keep your letter short and you're more likely to get a reply in *PC ZONE*

★ In regards to the recent response of a Mr Joshua Berry to my letter in your October issue: yes, he probably could kick my ass at any game (although not with his eyes closed). But I never did say I was any good at games, just that I liked to play them. My letter was never intended to threaten anyone's manhood (or boyhood, as the case may be). As for Mr Berry, perhaps he should re-consider his attitude towards women if he ever expects to lose his cherry.

Miss Tamara

PS: My subscription card is in the post (no, really!) And on that bombshell...

★ I have some questions about *Duke 4 Ever*

1. Will it need a 3D card?
 2. Will you be doing a review on it soon?
 3. Will you send me all the info that you have?
 4. When will it be out?
- Please reply. I am a big Duke fan. He's just so skill.

Seb.

1. *Duke 4 Ever* will almost definitely need a 3D card to run.
2. The game's out next year (hopefully around March). We'll review it as soon as we get our hands on it.
3. We're giving you all the info we have now. We hope to have a big preview on the game sometime soon.
4. See 2.

★ I happy. I have see pictures in your magazine with my unit for *Total Annihilation* game game. I want to say a big THANK to *PC ZONE* and a long live. I am sorry for my English, I am French

DCS (Manu)

Think nothing of it. And we're not even going to slag you off seeing as your English is much better than our French. Probably.

STOP

Stop the worldwide wait. Get on the BT Highway.

Does your computer grind to a halt? Then get on the BT Highway. Because this simple box converts your existing phone line into two high-speed digital lines. You can use your phone and run your PC at 64Kb per second. Or you can use both lines together and get 128Kb per second. Don't wait any longer.



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amount of prejudice content in your magazine towards foreigners, especially Persians. Yes, I am Persian, and proud of it. In issue 66 you wrote: "Prince Of Persia, TURBANTASTIC FUN." Is that meant to be funny or something? Then you wrote: "Unable to decide who had the best turban, they came to blows." If that's your way of

saying "Wow, look at us, everybody, we're so funny. Come and buy our magazine" then you can stick your magazine where the sun don't shine. Persians don't even wear turbans, for God's sake.

Now, let's move on. In issue 69 you printed a letter in Sick Notes from Anon. Why did you print this sucker's letter? It really

offended me. Not because I'm from Iceland, because I'm not, but because he used the word 'foreign bastard' (and several other things). What made you think that your readers were going to be amused by this (bad) letter? I suggest you stop making fun of turban-wearing Persians and stop printing letters from racist bastards like Anon.

Thank you. Keep up the good work on the magazine though, it's brill.

Poya Rezae

★ We never said there was anything wrong with turbans. In fact we referred to them in an amusingly affectionate way. You, however, have been quick off the mark to disassociate yourself in no uncertain terms from turban-wearing individuals. So what's wrong with turbans then, eh? Got a bit of a problem have you? Honestly, it's a disgrace. Incidentally, Charlie Brooker had a go at Anon for his blatant racism, and any other letters of this nature will be treated with the contempt they deserve. Now read our lips: chill out. Now.

OUTRAGEOUS DRUG ALLEGATION

What kind of drugs is Patrick McCarthy on? *International Cricket Captain* is a great game. So what if they call it 'Captain' instead of 'Manager'? So what if it's not

as good as Champ Man? No game is as good as champ man. And what's all this crap about the game only being so high in the charts because England won a Test match? Come on, it got to number five in the charts. Get your head checked.

Matt Green

★ Rather than agree to differ, you've obviously decided that a more mature approach would be to accuse Patrick (who reviewed ICC in *PC ZONE*) of drug abuse. We're speechless. He doesn't even drink, for God's sake. And yes, ICC did do well in the charts. So did the Spice Girls. We rest our case.



FROM THE WEBSITE

Point your Web browser to the **PC ZONE** website at www.pczone.co.uk and have your say. It's faster than a letter and cheaper than a courier

★ **Caesar 3!** On the box they should warn you that once you play for an hour, you just can't stop. Even with Caesar arresting you, you still have to carry on. Someone's been asking me if they could borrow it, but I just know I wouldn't get it back for ages. It's too addictive.

Cultist

★ What is it with *Unreal*? I have a P300MMX, 64Mb RAM, Voodoo1, and the game still jerks in 640x480 - and it

even does it in lower res! Epic Megagames can shove it up their arse.

Bassman

★ Classic games never die. The only game that I play at the moment is the original *Command & Conquer*. It rocks, and is better than the PlayStation version of *Red Alert*, which is shite.

Raptor8

★ I keep hearing of people having a demo of *Half-Life*. Where can I get it?

The version of *Half-Life* we were playing prior to our review (on page 88) was a beta of the OEM version (which will be supplied as part of a bundle with certain 3D cards). We hope to have a proper demo for our CD in the next issue or two.

★ *Wing Commander: Secret Ops* is nothing more than a large demo/advertisement. They just want you to buy *Wing Commander Prophecy*, which is actually quite good!

Dynamite

IT'S ABOUT TO GO OFF...

DELTA
FORCE

NOVALOGIC

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USS Enterprise

100%
100%
100%
100%
100%
100%
100%

FBC USS Excelsior

Comm
Warp
Impulse
Sensors
Primary
Secondary

Oops! Captain Kirk and his merry band of lycra-wearing cohorts are going to be less than impressed when they see what a mess you've made of his brand new starship.

KICK SOME FEDERATION BUTT IN STAR TREK: KLINGON ACADEMY

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

DEVELOPER Interplay

PUBLISHER Interplay

EXPECTED RELEASE DATE Spring '99

IN SUMMARY

Play a Klingon warrior in the middle of a simulated war with the United Federation of Planets. Includes more than 30 missions, a mission builder, six distinct Klingon races, and much more besides.

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

First space combat sim in the *Star Trek* universe. Participate in large-scale battles with entire fleets of capital-size ships. Blast away at the spineless humans with their bright corridors and comfortable furniture.

POTENTIAL PITFALLS

bljehg be' chugh vaj blHegh (*Could be a one way ticket to Geeksville - Klingon Ed.*)

Take the helm of large-scale Klingon warships as you battle to defeat the Federation

★ REPORT Phil Wand



Bang! There goes the rec room...



Boom! That's the toilets blown out.

More realistic than *Starfleet Academy*.

Regular Bird of Prey. Yesterday.



New weapons, new graphics, new objects, new craft and new space 'terrain'.

Interplay have pitched *Star Trek: Klingon Academy* as the first of a new breed of space simulators – boldly going where no other space simulator has gone before. This may sound like the sort of ballyhoo that spews forth from marketing departments across the planet, but just take a look at some of the screenshots.

For starters, the 3D accelerated universe is filled with grand-scale ships that seem a whole lot more realistic than before. This is thanks to Interplay's in-house development team, who went to considerable lengths making sure that lighting conditions seem 'spot on' and true to the movies. The end result is that objects don't look so angular and sterile – a major problem with polygonal 3D games these days.

Many of the ships in *Klingon Academy* are accurate models of familiar craft. For example, take a look at the USS Excelsior and the way

its call sign is lovingly illuminated from underneath. Or the way the eerie floodlighting on Attack Cruisers paints a ghostly green outline against the blackness of space. Just like on the goggle box and big screen.

Importantly for Trekkies, the plot puts you at the helm of a Klingon Bird of Prey for the first time ever. You have been inducted into the prestigious Klingon Defence Force's

“The goal for *Klingon Academy* was to come up with a new *Star Trek* experience, totally different from anything you've ever seen before”

RAPHAEL HERNANDEZ, PRODUCER AT INTERPLAY

Elite Command Academy and are to be instructed by none other than General Chang, the greatest living cowpat head in the whole Klingon empire. You get to learn the code of the honourable warrior, battle tactics, and warship command – sitting at the helm of large-scale craft as they sock it out with the United Federation of



This ugly 'mofu' is called the Klingon Muppet of Prey. Of course it isn't.



What's this ship then?



Best hide in a cloud of space gas.



Not much left of this: procedural texturing will make the ships look more worn as battle ensues.

Planets in a simulated war.

“The goal for *Klingon Academy* was to come up with a new *Star Trek* experience, totally different from anything you've ever seen before,” says Raphael Hernandez, producer at Interplay. We rubbed our chins, and asked if there was more to the game than a simple swapping of sides.

“Players see everything from the enemy's point of view, but the game is


specialist tactics, depending on the situation in which they are employed. Systems such as the Antimatter Field Projector Device and Tractor Beam Resonator Cannon sound complicated – and they are.

The game is based around over 30 different missions and includes an elaborate editor that enables players to create even more. As these missions progress, the simulated war turns real and you are asked to fight alongside General Chang in a considerably larger, real-life struggle. Battles become sprawling engagements that consist almost entirely of capital-size ships from the six distinct Klingon races. Many of these ships are exclusive to *Klingon Academy* and to *Star Trek* itself.

Ahead, spooze factor nine. Engage!

so much more than that. It features diverse tactical environments such as asteroid fields, nebulae, ion storms and black holes. We've included new weapons, new graphics, new objects, new craft and an interactive space terrain. It's not just about being a Klingon.”

The new weapons systems require



Every leaf is rendered.
Every damned one.
That's how good the
graphics engine is.

WALKING IN AN ALIEN WONDERLAND:

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

DEVELOPER Ratloop

PUBLISHER To be announced

EXPECTED RELEASE DATE Second quarter 1999

IN SUMMARY

A better-looking *Tomb Raider*. But in space. And with a bloke. And aliens.

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

The 3D engine is stunningly powerful and goes into gob-smacking detail.

POTENTIAL PITFALLS

Will push your machine specs to the limit, so upgrading may be necessary. Ouch.

HAB-12

From the people who brought you *Malice* for *Quake*: a game with individually rendered leaves. Now that's progress

★ **REPORT** Paul Presley



Each HAB has different alien lifeforms. All of which must die.

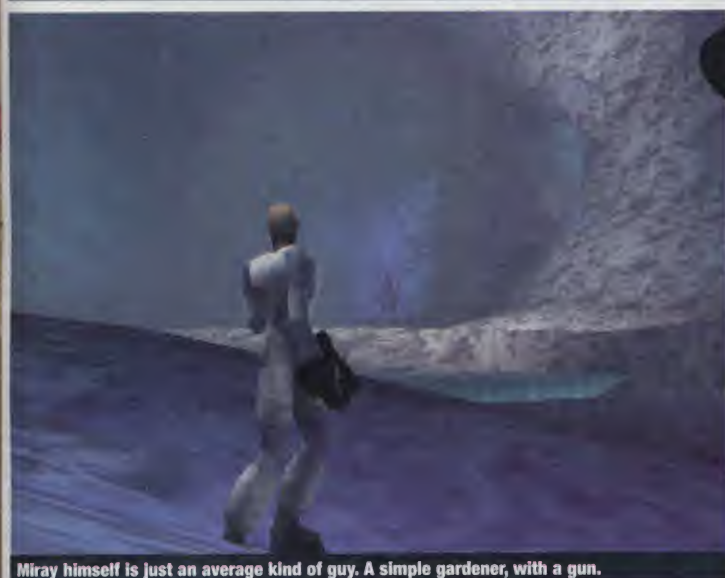


At times, HAB-12 is like a fifth-form nature ramble. Sort of.



Each HAB is vast, so there's a lot of exploration involved.

The HABs range from leafy glades to snowy wastes.



Miray himself is just an average kind of guy. A simple gardener, with a gun.



"I say - Isn't that a greater-spotted wood tit up there?"

Finally. Someone has decided to make a game of the 1971 science fiction classic *Silent Running*. Be Bruce Dern as he ponders the ecological fate of mankind. Laugh inwardly at the antics of the three small robot things whose names no one can remember. Shoot yourself in the eye as you realise that science fiction films have become even more insufferably dull than Polish art-house movies and will continue to remain that way until *Star Wars* comes along some six years later.

Actually, *HAB-12* isn't quite like Douglas Trumbull's disputed classic (*Mallo* loves it; I'd rather watch a Joe Pasquale marathon), although the plot has certain similarities. You play the part of MRY35846 (or Miray), a general labourer on board the giant spaceship *Sentient*, home to a dozen special purpose bio-habitats, each housing alien ecologies.

Disaster hits the ship and wipes out

most of the crew, leaving only you to reach the escape pods. Unfortunately, to get to them you have to negotiate your way through each of the 'habs', dealing with the diverse alien life forms contained within. 'Dealing with them' basically means killing them. Now that's a film I'd watch.

"The main thrust of the story is just to stay alive," explains Lucas Pope, lead programmer of *HAB-12*. "Miray

"The main thrust of the story is just to stay alive. Miray is no special operative. He's no Bruce Willis, he's just your average guy"

is no special operative, he's not on a mission to save hundreds of lives. He's no Bruce Willis, he's just your average guy."

Helping to bring the different alien environs to life is a highly detailed 3D engine, 3DGE, licensed from Twilight 3D. "It's a very powerful engine with incredible support and a lot of

flexibility," says Pope. *HAB-12*'s graphics are evidence of this, with astonishing amounts of detail and a specs list as long as a baboon's arm.

Shadows, for example, are calculated in real time, and everything - not just the main character - is affected by light sources. Pope claims this is achieved without any special hardware, which, if it's true, means *HAB-12* will look

bone deformation." We're sure that means something to someone.

The game is played out in *Tomb Raider*-style 3D. Pope isn't worried that the current fashion for action games is first-person. If anything, he's revelling in the benefits that seeing your character can bring: "*HAB-12* is similar in concept to *Half-Life*, but the difference is character development. Since we can actually show the lead character on screen, it's easier to develop him in an interesting way."

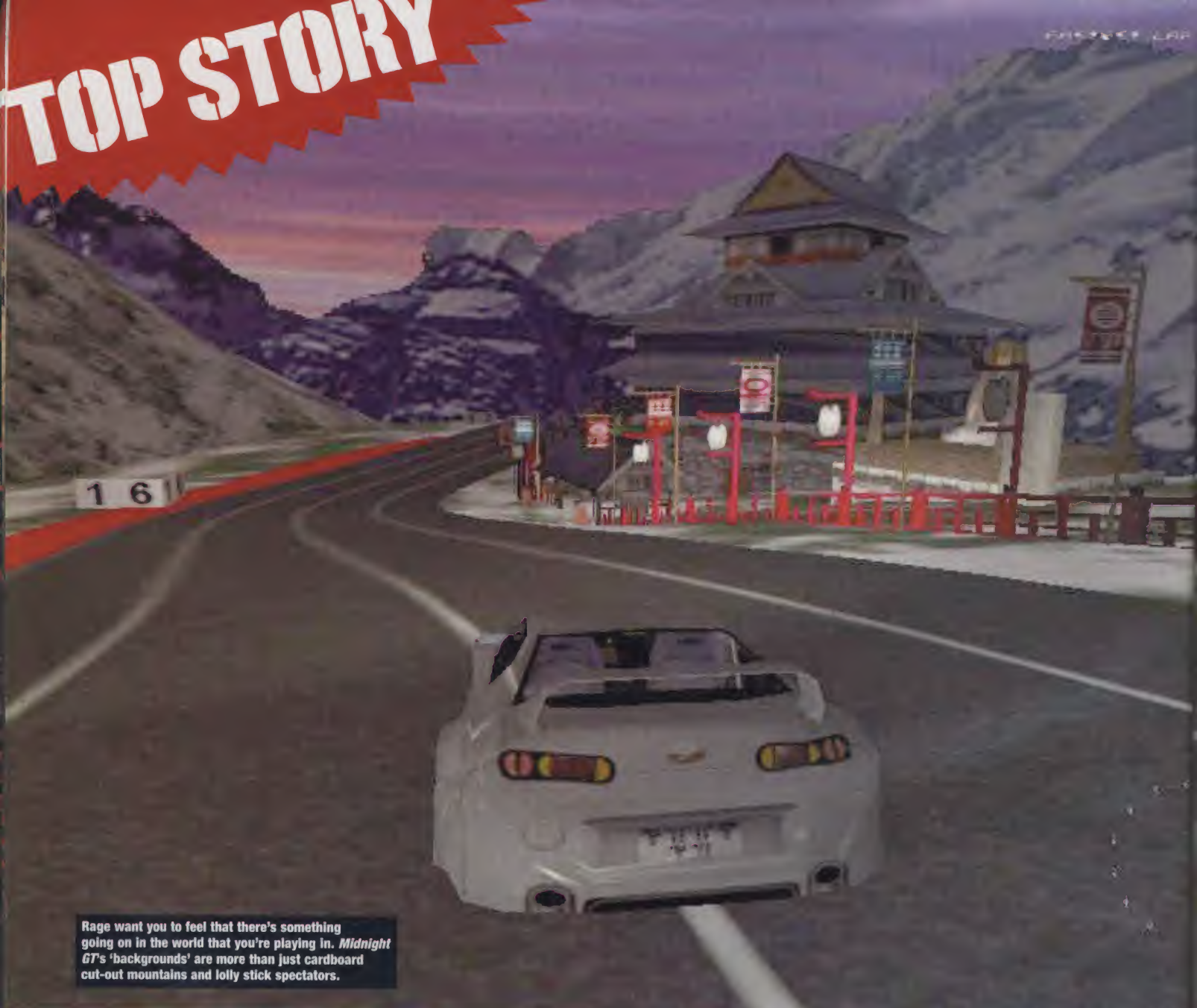
The alien environments are important, too. "You won't be spending all your time in crate-filled labs," says Pope. "You're almost exclusively fighting your way through alien-infested HABs. We're trying to achieve the perfect balance between action and adventure that *Another World* had."

HAB-12 looks and sounds as though it will be pretty special. There's a lot of work still to do, though, and we'll keep you updated as time goes on. [EW]

LUCAS POPE, LEAD PROGRAMMER, HAB-12

better than anything seen before. "It's an important step towards realism," he adds.

Then there's Vertex Manipulation: "a method for giving real-time, smooth deformation to a 3D mesh. It's better than linked objects since there are no seams, and it's much less processor-intensive than real-time



Rage want you to feel that there's something going on in the world that you're playing in. *Midnight GT*'s 'backgrounds' are more than just cardboard cut-out mountains and lolly stick spectators.

BREAKIN' THE LAW IN MIDNIGHT GT

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

DEVELOPER Rage Liverpool

PUBLISHER Rage

EXPECTED RELEASE DATE May '99

IN SUMMARY

A cross between arcade racer and racing sim, *Midnight GT* is a frantic, high-speed car game with a high danger quotient.

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

We know Rage can do the fancy graphics side of things, so *Midnight GT* will undoubtedly look the bollocks. The game will also be very pick-up-and-playable.

POTENTIAL PITFALLS

The racing game genre is a crowded place in which to reside, so games really have to play well to make any impact.

Rage Software are known for their exceptional graphics and solid, uncomplicated gameplay. This new racing game looks set to continue that trend

• **REPORT** Paul Mallinson



© "A white car and a red car," said the PC ZONE car expert.



Being *Midnight GT*, most of the racing is done between dusk and dawn. Which might explain a few things.



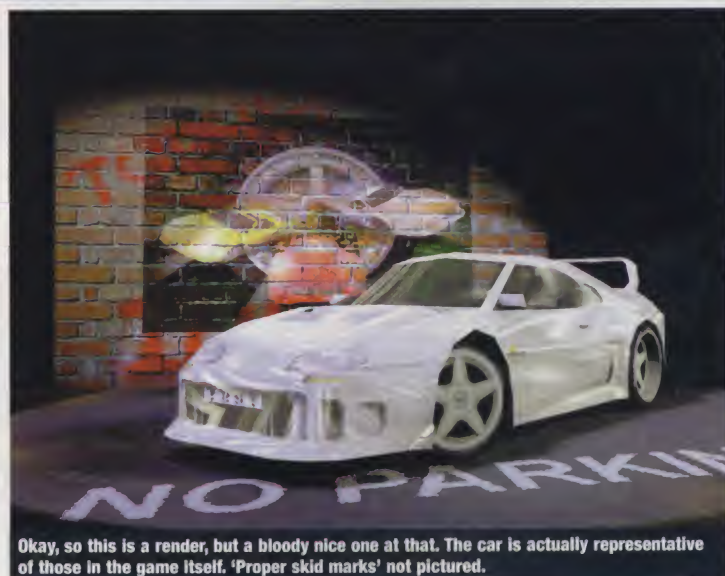
Most tracks have over 300 real-time lights.



Speed cameras can catch you out and result in penalty point deductions. Luckily, they can be switched off on the options menu.



Weather forecast: there'll be no rain, but there will be differing conditions such as icy roads, wet roads and fog. Which, as Jeremy Wells is wont to say, is nice.



Okay, so this is a render, but a bloody nice one at that. The car is actually representative of those in the game itself. 'Proper skid marks' not pictured.

Ever heard of NSX racing – the weird, completely illegal Japanese road 'sport' involving high-speed car chases on busy urban highways? Neither had we until we heard about Rage Software's *Midnight GT*. Based on the youth race fraternity who thrash it out on the streets of Japan's busiest cities after dark, this forthcoming PC race title certainly seems to offer more than just a straight sprint from A to B, and could be an amalgam of some of the best examples of the genre all rolled into one.

"What we're trying to do is create a 'real road' racing simulator," explains Simon Donbavand, producer of *Midnight GT*. The roads you race on are apparently based on real roads found in Japan, bar the odd tweak to make things more playable. Even the geography of the eight available courses is authentically replicated to a high level of detail. The NSX cars, as mentioned above, of course make

their appearance, as do seven other Japanese sports cars, all of which are 'lookalikes' of their real-life counterparts.

"We couldn't use models of the real cars," explains Simon, "because, basically, we wanted to destroy them, which manufacturers don't like you doing. Our cars are based around Supras, MR2s – well known Japanese sports cars. People will know what

“We couldn't use models of the real cars because, basically, we wanted to destroy them, which manufacturers don't like you doing”

they are when they see them, but we've changed details – logos, headlight configurations etcetera – which legally let us off the hook.” Rage have even employed the services of world-renowned design agency Pinafarina (the people who design cars for Ferrari) to help with their concept designs.

Where it matters in this type of game, though, is on the road itself. *Midnight GT* features highly realistic physics modelling, but remains pick-up-and-playable nonetheless. Simon details the lengths to which they're going with the realism: "The way the car acts and reacts totally depends on how you drive. Each wheel reacts independently: if you've got two

"There'll be real-time lighting and photo-realistic reflection maps on the cars," enthuses Simon, "plus progressive texturing, like mud caking on to the car and proper skid marks, and loads of track-side animations, some of which you can interact with."

Midnight GT's eight-strong Liverpool-based team have come up with their own 3D engine specifically designed to create this game, and they've got big things planned for it. "We're heading for photo-realism in this game," proclaims Simon.

There are loads of other things to see and do, too: split-screen two-player; oncoming traffic; civilian cars that can lose control and crash into you; car upgrades; a league system; 'capture the flag' team races on specifically designed multiplayer courses; night vision replays from helicopters... far too many to mention here. Needless to say, *PC ZONE* will be on hand to tell you more about it when the time is right. **EW**

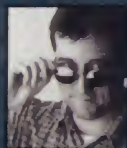
SIMON DONBAVAND, PRODUCER, MIDNIGHT GT

wheels on gravel and two wheels on tarmac, the two wheels on gravel will react differently to those on tarmac. This way, you don't get any pre-set, pre-determined 'hard-wired' physics modelling in the handling."

As usual, Rage are going to even greater lengths with the graphics. And no one is complaining.

THREE WORDS...

★ **REPORT** Paul Mallinson, News Ed



Retailers: keep 'em. Most of 'em anyway. If you've already had a chance to read *Cities* this

month (see Bulletin page 38), you may have noticed the distinct lack of co-operation from staff at the two computer shops we visited on our recent jaunt to Preston. Basically, they would not talk to us. Even on a basic level. We could have gone to another town and talked to other people in other shops, but we almost certainly would have garnered the same response.

The problem, as you will no doubt ascertain from reading the piece, seemed to originate from the upper echelons of the companies involved: Game, and Electronic Boutique. The big bosses had apparently told their staff not to speak to the press.

It's a crazy state of affairs – one that puzzles me, and one that causes nothing but embarrassment for all the people involved. Why they issued this instruction we don't know. *PC ZONE* is known, on occasion, for taking the piss and having a bit of a laugh, and it could be that they've taken exception to something we've said in the past, and it could be just us that they're not talking to. If this is the case, then I have nothing but contempt for both Game and Electronic Boutique.

What do these people hope to achieve by restricting us in this way? Do they have a sense of humour? Do they not want the publicity? Are we harming their trade in any way? Questions, questions, questions. But no answers. Game? EB? Who's idea was it to do this, and for what reasons?

On a lighter note: *Half-Life* is here. It's brilliant. It's fabulous (read the review on page 88 for the full low-down). Here's my tuppence worth: Valve have just made gaming history. Buy *Half-Life* and have yourself a happy Christmas.

THE PCZONE CHARTS

More comprehensive than ever

P.26

ChartTrack

SPECIAL REPORT

The adventure game is not dead, it's just resting a bit

P.30



IN RESIDENCE AGAIN

Capcom's zombies return to the PC

Games-players the world over are rejoicing at the news that Capcom have, at long bloody last, officially announced *Resident Evil 2* for the PC. A mega-selling horror classic, previously PlayStation-only, *Resident Evil 2* follows the story of Leon (a rookie cop) and Claire (brother of Chris Redfield, the lead character from the first *Resident Evil*), trapped inside a zombie-infested town, and in search of an answer to these ghoulish goings-on. Those who have already played the game will know just how good it really is: blood, guts, guns, monsters and slime. And that's only the first five minutes. The clever, twisting storyline and wonderfully atmospheric set pieces – the most impressive elements of the games – should translate perfectly, so PC game-players are in for something of a treat when it comes out early in the new year.



One of the scariest, goriest, most gruesome games ever is coming to the PC.

UNREAL 2 NOT EPIC



Unreal 2 to be made by third party.

It has been confirmed by Epic MegaGames that Legend Entertainment are to develop *Unreal 2* for them, although no work has begun on the coding of the game yet. No reason for the decision has yet been given by Epic. The original *Unreal* team are currently working on a new add-on for the first game, more details of which we'll have next month, although it remains to be seen what they will move on to after they complete it. More news, and a full explanation, when we have it.

ONLINE ZONE

Cultivate weed and spit on people – for free!

P.32



CITIES

This month we have trouble with the shops themselves

P.38



TECH-HEAD

The important technical news, collected and deciphered

P.40



HOTLINE

All-new, all-improved at-a-glance releases

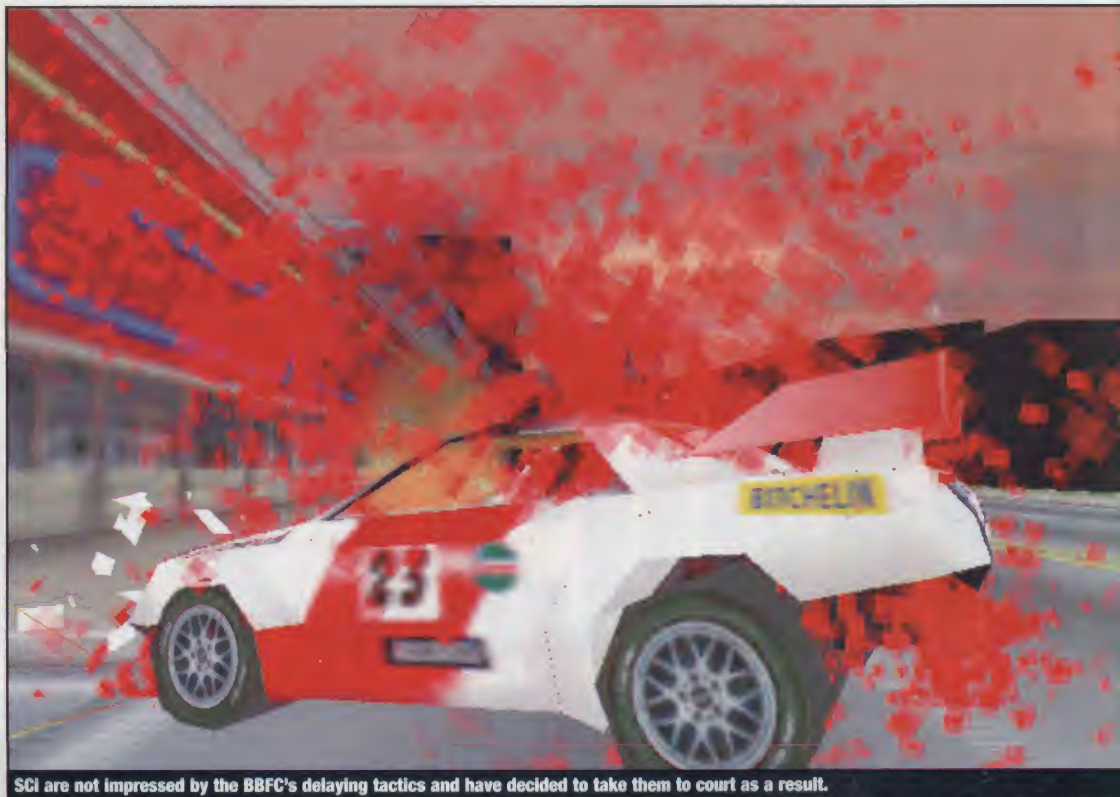
P.44



The full blood version is outrageously funny...



...and outrageously violent too.



SCI are not impressed by the BBFC's delaying tactics and have decided to take them to court as a result.

SCI OFFERS BBFC OUTSIDE

SCI and the BBFC lock horns over the uncut version of *Carmageddon II*

CONTROVERSY EXPERT Charlie Brooker

By the time your piggy eyes peer at these words, *Carmageddon II: Carpalypse Now* should be available in the shops – but only in its toned-down form. Unless, that is, the squabble developing between publishers SCI and the British Board of Film Classification has escalated into a full-scale war.

The trouble began several months ago, when SCI sent a four-minute demo version of the game for the board's approval. Weeks passed, during which SCI assumed members of the board were assessing the game's content, stroking their chins and pulling slightly concerned faces at the horror of it all.

In fact, that wasn't what was happening at all: instead, the BBFC hadn't been able to *run* the demo – because they didn't have a 3D accelerator card in their machine. To add to the confusion, the board neglected to inform SCI of the technical hitch – instead, the situation came to light during a telephone conversation between James Ferman, the BBFC's ex-head mekon, and Roger Bennett, from the games industry body ELSPA, several

weeks after the demo was submitted.

Having sorted out their hardware problems, the board then announced it was calling in a group of psychologists to evaluate the game's potential for transforming people into crazed, nihilistic serial killers. This was the final straw for SCI, who did the metaphorical equivalent of turning a pub table over and threatening someone with a broken pint glass by announcing their intention to take the BBFC to court over the delays.

"This repeat performance of last year's delaying tactics can only be a result of severe 'sour grapes' at the BBFC for losing the appeal last year," scowled SCI's Jane Cavanagh, referring to the eventual overturning of the "ban" on the blood-drenched version of the original *Carmageddon*. The BBFC, meanwhile, refused to be drawn on the issue.

The spat lit the fuse for a media debate on gaming violence. As ever, most commentators made the common mistake of assuming computer games are played exclusively by dribbling, knock-kneed schoolboys, neglecting to notice the *real* obscenity at the heart of *Carpocalypse Now*: the

☹ "Green or red blood sir?"



fact that woeful heavy metal act Iron Maiden are now included on the soundtrack. Several tracks from the tumultuous rockers' *oeuvre* will now hit your ears like a shower of shit each time you play.

"If any computer game shares our philosophy on life, without a doubt this is the one," burred the Maiden's lead clown, Blaze Bayley, nonsensically.

“You should be able to aim your vehicle at the scenery and see a different sequence of pirouettes each time”



The developers spent hours videoing real championship stages for the game.



RADICAL RALLY

Magnetic Fields, the dev team behind Europress' excellent Rally series, return with the ace-looking and dead realistic Rally Championship 99

★ **AT THE WHEEL** Phil Wand

Based around the flourishing Mobil 1 British Championship, *Rally Championship 99* builds on the success of *Network Q RAC Rally* (PCZ #68, 70%) with a photo-realistic experience of accurately modelled cars and carefully mapped Ordnance Survey data.

“We visited the actual championship stages, took dozens of photographs and captured hours of video,” says Richard Vanner, executive producer at Europress. “So the reason the game stages look so real is because they are the actual stages.”

But it's not just about careering down authentic muddy tracks at grievous speeds. Developers Magnetic Fields (*Network Q, International Rally Championship*) have put practically no limitations on where you can drive, meaning Colin McRae wannabes should prepare themselves for a dynamic environment of forks in the road, dead-end routes, blocked lanes, hidden paths and shortcuts.

You can choose from more than ten accurately modelled rally cars, each with unique handling characteristics and collision routines. Thanks to an advanced physics model, you should be able to aim your vehicle at the scenery and see a different sequence of pirouettes each time. The game also promises ‘sophisticated artificial intelligence’ – which usually means every opponent drives like a bastard and tries to sideswipe you when overtaking.

Other features include 3D sound, comprehensive hardware support (including force feedback sticks and wheels), and the essential network and multiplayer options. For those of you wishing to get



You can also, literally, get off the beaten track.

stuck in and fling some mud at bystanders, an instant action arcade mode is also provided.

Everything is rendered in glorious accelerated 3D and features a geeky mix of bi- and tri-linear filtering, mip mapping, anisotropic filtering, specular lighting, alpha blending and vertex fog. Basically, it looks fab – you can see for yourself next spring. **PCZ**

Naturally, *RC 99* supports network and multiplayer options, plus an instant action arcade mode.



Each car has unique handling characteristics



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CD-ROM

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CHARTS

New and improved – PC ZONE's comprehensive charts. Now incorporating more information than ever, including the buzz on the streets from you lot

THE MEGASTORES TOP10

OCT	NOV	TITLE	LABEL	GROUP	REVIEW SCORE %
-	1	FA PLFM 99	EA SPORTS	ELECTRONIC ARTS	72
-	2	DUNE 2000 (with free book)*	WESTWOOD STUDIOS	ELECTRONIC ARTS	62
-	3	KLINGON: HONOUR GUARD	MICROPROSE	HASBRO INTERACTIVE	94
-	4	AGE OF EMPIRES	MICROSOFT	MICROSOFT	94
-	5	COMMANDOS: BEHIND ENEMY LINES	EIDOS INTERACTIVE	EIDOS INTERACTIVE	87
-	6	TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOX SIX	RED STORM	TAKE 2	89
-	7	GRAND PRIX LEGENDS	SIERRA	CENDANT	90
-	8	UNREAL	GT INTERACTIVE	GT INTERACTIVE	93
-	9	NEED FOR SPEED III	ELECTRONIC ARTS	ELECTRONIC ARTS	91
-	10	QUAKE II	ID	ACTIVISION	97

* Limited Edition (while stocks last)

THE TOP10

OCT	NOV	TITLE	LABEL	GROUP	WKS IN CHART	%
-	1	FA PLFM 99	EA SPORTS	EA	2	72
-	2	COLIN McRAE RALLY	CODE MASTERS	CODE MASTERS	3	93
-	3	TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX	REDSTORM	TAKE 2	2	89
-	4	KLINGON: HONOUR GUARD	MICROPROSE	HASBRO	2	94
6	5	TITANIC - ADVENTURE OUT OF TIME	EUROPRESS	EUROPRESS	20	NR
-	6	CAESAR III	SIERRA ONLINE	CENDANT	1	92
1	7	COMMANDOS: BEHIND ENEMY LINES	EIDOS	EIDOS	19	87
-	8	DUNE 2000	WESTWOOD	EA	4	62
4	9	PREMIER MANAGER 98	GREMLIN	GREMLIN	16	55
-	10	AGE OF EMPIRES	MICROSOFT	MICROSOFT	53	94

(Compiled by Chart Track © ELSPA 1998)

WIN THE ENTIRE VIRGIN TOP 10!

PC ZONE and Virgin have teamed up to give you the chance to win every game in the current Top 10. All you have to do to enter the draw is answer this simple question:

Question: Who is the current manager of Leicester City Football Club?

Just answer the above question and send it on a postcard, along with with all the information requested, to the address below

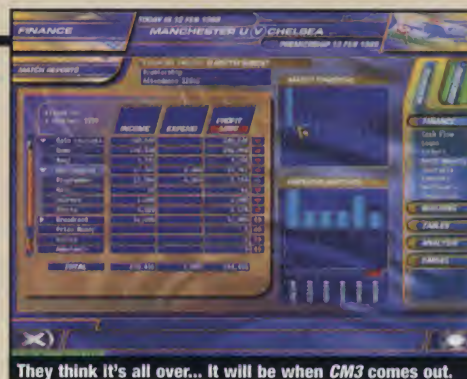
☛ Name / Address / Postcode / Daytime phone number / Email / Job title / Company name / Age if under 18

☛ Please tell us if you do not wish to receive details of further special offers or new products from other companies

☛ Are you a current subscriber to PC ZONE?

Send your answer on a postcard to: PC ZONE Chart Compo (71), 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. Closing date: Friday 11 December

☛ Terms and conditions: Winners will be notified by post. No cash alternative. Prizes not necessarily as shown. No correspondence will be entered into. The Ed's decision is final. All the other usual competition rules, conditions and restrictions apply. Capiche?



They think it's all over... It will be when CM3 comes out.

CHART COMMENT

This month sees *FA Premier League Football Manager 99* (PCZ #70, 72%) nestling atop both the Virgin Our Price and the ELSPA/Chart Track charts. Despite lacklustre reviews in most PC games magazines, it's selling very well. How long will it hold out? We predict until CM3 comes out.

Worthwhile additions to the charts this month include *Colin McRae Rally* (PCZ #68, 93%) and *Klingon: Honour Guard* (PCZ #68, 94%), both highly recommended by PC ZONE. Shocking oddities this month include *Titanic: Adventure Out Of Time*, having survived for 20 weeks already. Having not reviewed it, we can presume it is either a) very good, or b) cashing in on the success of James Cameron's movie and the dim-wittedness of many PC games players.

Paul Mallinson

THE BUZZ ON THE STREETS

"Ooh, no *Quake II*? No *Unreal*? Looks like we're close enough to the Next Big Thing (*Half-Life*, *SiN*, *Duke 4 Ever* etc) for people to be saving their pennies. And hype wins out again with *Dune 2000* and *Titanic*. If Westwood put a turd in a box and called it 'Titanic 2000' they'd probably make another fortune."

Richard Beer, London

"I'm suprised *Klingon: Honour Guard* has bothered to show its ugly face, especially with the slugging it got recently." (Not in PC ZONE it didn't – Ed.)

Nephilim, Macclesfield

"*Klingon: Honour Guard* at number 4?! Surely thats got to be a typo? 'Klingon Bollocks Guard', I'd call it."

Grype, PC ZONE website

"I don't know about this month's chart, but I can bet that *Caesar III* is going to be next month's Number One."

Chris Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

"*Premier Manager 98* and *99* in the Top 10? Next you'll be telling us *MS Excel* is the highest new entry in the charts."

Jonathan, London

"*Dune 2000* at number two? It looks completely crap."

Harrison, PC ZONE website

"I can't wait for *Half-Life* to come out. It sounds like it's going to be the absolute business."

Hawk, PC ZONE website

RETRO CHARTS

1 YEAR AGO...

- 1 Jedi Knight LucasArts
- 2 Age Of Empires Microsoft
- 3 Flight Sim 98 Microsoft
- 4 Total Annihilation GT
- 5 C&C: Red Alert Virgin

2 YEARS AGO...

- 1 Championship Manager 96/97 Domark
- 2 Rally Championship Europress
- 3 Encarta 97 Microsoft
- 4 Dark Forces Virgin White Label
- 5 Flight Sim 6 Microsoft

5 YEARS AGO...

- 1 Day Of The Tentacle US Gold
- 2 Return To Zork Activision
- 3 Dune Virgin
- 4 The 7th Guest Virgin
- 5 Kyrandia Virgin

Interactive Magic's *Apocalypse*: a virtual combat theatre to rival *WarGasm*?

Realtime searchlights, or a problem with the API?

Didn't know the army took on people this fat.

Whether the rear-view mirrors work or not remains to be seen.

Da, da, da, da, daaah,
da, da, da, da, daah...

"All we need now," says Mallo, "are some real-time shadders."

Check out the lighting on that. Definitely an improvement, visually, over other I-Magic games.

APOCALYPSE NOW

A sophisticated government ploy to bolster army recruitment, or just a game?

IN COMMAND Keith Pullin


Recent evidence suggests that a high number of you fantasise about being part of a crack Special Forces unit, abseiling through windows and crawling through begonia bushes. *Commandos*, *Spec Ops* and *Rainbow Six* have all centred on clandestine activities, and all are doing pretty well. Interactive Magic have duly spotted this, and so... *Apocalypse* (previously titled *Poseidon*), by Real Virtuality, has made it on to their burgeoning '99 release schedule.

Apocalypse is a real-time, first-person perspective battle simulation where you deftly co-ordinate and

control an ace Special Forces unit during an island conflict. The playing environment spans a huge archipelago, and to aid you in the reclamation of this inhospitable territory, jeeps, tanks, APCs and even helicopters have been laid on. While the non-linear gameplay positively encourages mindless thrashing about in the jungle, the best way to use this military might is in some kind of well thought out strategy.

There's a goddam war on! And you're not up against a bunch of opium-smoking grunts with spud guns. No. AI for your adversaries, as well as your

own team, is being perfected to the extent that soldiers will make their own survival decisions. For example, a lone, worried private might radio back to HQ just to check that everything's okay. Now that is amazing.

Photo-realistic terrain, painstaking true-physics modelling, day and night lighting and even changing weather effects mean you need some serious PC horsepower to appreciate the full impact of *Apocalypse*. Still, it's not coming out until May, so you've got time to save up. If you can't wait, join the TA. But isn't that just what they want you to do? 

ON YOUR BIKE

Codemasters turn to two wheels with the announcement of a new pushbike race game. Now let's see those high knees

★ OVER THE HANDLEBARS Steve Hill

Pepsi Max drinkers will be thrilled to learn of *No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking* from Codemasters, their first foray into the realms of two-wheeled action, following a number of successful driving games. As their m****ting director Mike Hayes was moved to say: "*No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking* will follow in the tradition of *Colin McRae Rally* and the *TOCA* titles, combining realistic racing simulation with outstanding gameplay mechanics, and

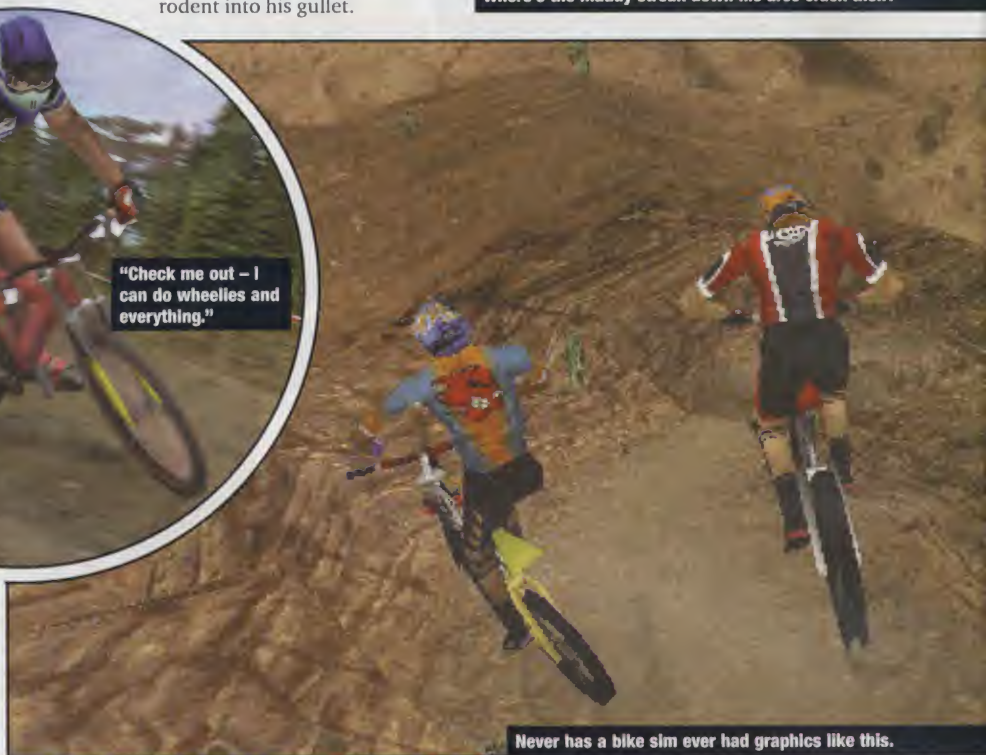
will graphically set new standards. The 'No Fear' branding is perfectly suited to the title and the current games market and delivers a great hook for which to hang the title on. The game captures all the breathtaking excitement of mountain biking at break neck speeds and we're confident that this will be one of the most wanted games for spring 1999." He then peeled his face off, extended his jaw and dropped a small rodent into his gullet.



Where's the muddy streak down his arse crack then?



3D Deathchase on Griffers? No, it's far more than that.



Never has a bike sim ever had graphics like this.

TAISHO NOW SHOGUN

Dreamtime Interactive have changed the name of their forthcoming Japanese real-time war strategy game *Taisho* to *Shogun* in an attempt to make more sense of the title. As reported last issue, this highly detailed and stylised combat game will be set in the period from 1467 and 1600 and is due for release through Electronic Arts in spring of next year. The name change has not affected any of this. Capiche?



Name change = more publicity for Dreamtime Interactive.

YOUR MOST WANTED

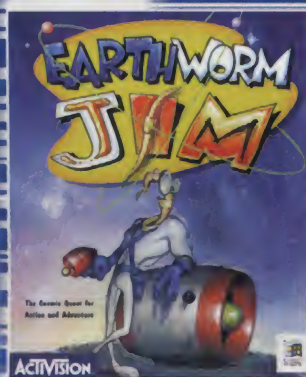
A look at the games you most want to see over the next few months, and when they're expected

- 1 Duke Nukem 4 Ever (GT) – Nov '98
- 2 Half-Life (Cendant) – Oct '98
- 3 Quake III Arena (Activision) – Spring '99
- 4 Carmageddon II (SCI) – Nov '98
- 5 Championship Manager 3 (Eidos) – Nov '98
- 6 Driver (Reflections) – Early '99
- 7 X-Wing Alliance (LucasArts) – Mar '99
- 8 SIN (Activision) – Oct '98
- 9 Civilization: Call To Power (Activision) – Mar '99
- 10 Tiberian Sun (Westwood) – Dec '98

WIN! Submit your vote and go into the hat for a mystery prize draw. Email us at letters.pczone@dennils.co.uk with the subject line 'Most Wanted' or write to the usual address.

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and phenomenally
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thoroughly involving
experience."

8 out of 10 - EDGE

"As puzzle based
adventures go,
Zork Nemesis is
probably one of the
best I've seen."

90% - PC HOME



A NEW DIMENSION IN ADVENTURING

Like a mighty phoenix rising from the flames, the dying adventure genre is being reborn with a brand new image. And not a moment too soon for some

★ DIMENSION-HOPPING Paul Presley

SPECIAL REPORT



Steam may look like a first-person action game, but the essence remains true to the adventure genre.



The game you'll never see: Adventuresoft spent the best part of a million pounds on a 2D Simon The Sorcerer 3...



...only to discover that publishers were only interested in 3D. Hence months of work were scrapped and the game went 3D.

According to our esteemed news editor, Mallo, we are awaiting the mythical announcement by LucasArts of a 3D game with "an unsavoury pornographic relish". Perhaps that's stretching the point a little, but it's as good an indication as any of what state the previously ailing adventure game genre now finds itself in. We faithful followers of all things point-and-click are living in a state of metamorphosis. According to the current crop of game designers, the 2D adventure game is, once and for all, dead. Long live the 3D adventure game.

"If you look through any magazine, most games are full 3D. That's all people appear to be interested in," says Simon Woodroffe, designer of the highly successful *Simon The Sorcerer* games. "We started off doing *Simon 3* as a 2D game. We completed over 70 per cent of the graphics but couldn't get a publisher interested. Most of them were unwilling to take chances. They wanted 3D. They weren't interested in 2D. At the very least they wanted 3D rendered characters."

Finding a publisher willing to take chances in these professional days of 'focus groups', 'market shares' and 'fourth-quarter spends' is proving to be difficult for everyone, at least in the UK. Gregg Barnett of *Discworld's* Perfect Entertainment has first-hand experience. "Everything's very technology-based at the moment. If anyone wanted

to do a classic 2D animated game, they simply wouldn't be able to get a place with a publisher. They may in America, and in Europe - Germany in particular - they're still very much into 2D adventures. But our publishers wouldn't look at it."

The reason, as with most things in life, is money. "Everyone wants to make the next *Tomb Raider* or *Quake*," explains Woodroffe: "Something that'll sell a million copies around the world. Publishers are prepared to chuck a quarter of a million quid at a

COMING SOON

Enough talk. The following six games are the most eagerly awaited examples of this revolution in adventure gaming and all show just how advanced the genre has become. The boundaries may blur between action and adventure in some cases but, like it or not, this is how the future's going to be. Also, see *Mask Of Eternity* on page 101.



Name Good & Evil
Developer Cavedog Entertainment
Publisher GT Interactive
Website www.cavedog.com
Description A fully 3D world with over 50 worlds and dozens of sub-quests, the first adventure game from Ron Gilbert since *The Secret Of Monkey Island II* comes with the kind of high expectations that only the truly great artists deserve.



Name Simon The Sorcerer 3D
Developer Headfirst Productions
Publisher Adventuresoft
Website www.adventuresoft.com
Description Keen to learn from the mistakes of *The Feeble Files*, Adventuresoft are pinning a lot of hope on their wizardly hero in his new 3D guise. Like *Tomb Raider* but with a much greater emphasis on tried-and-tested adventuring elements.



Grim Fandango: a shining beacon for other adventures to follow.



The line between adventure games and *Tomb Raider*-style action games is blurred even more by *Galleon*.



Neverending Story: with 3D technology being as advanced as it is, fears that characterisation will be lost are ill-founded.

game, but they want to make a shitload of money out of it. If they don't think they're going to get that return then they won't bother listening."

NO HARD-CORE JOY

The one thing that seems strikingly apparent while talking to all these developers is that no one really appears to be too sure why the 2D style has fallen out of favour with both gamers and publishers. Revolution Software's Charles Cecil, author of the popular *Broken Sword* series, has one explanation: "Years ago, the point-and-click adventure evolved to best exploit the technology that existed at the time. As technology has driven forward, we've found that other genres, like action games, have advanced and innovated. This has proved very hard with the classic adventure because the genre is so well defined. While adventure aficionados are fiercely loyal, they're declining in numbers and this has made publishers nervous about commissioning this type of game."

Monkey Island creator Ron Gilbert, on the other hand, tends to feel nothing's really changed. "I don't think 2D is the reason adventures are in the

slumps," he says. "It's more to do with where current gamers' interests are. Adventures haven't lost any popularity – it's just that they've not gained in popularity like other genres have. You still sell the same number of copies of an adventure game today that you did five years ago."

Unfortunately, that no longer seems to be enough. The dedicated audience simply isn't big enough to warrant the investment. "I think for the hardcore market, 2D adventure games are dead," says Barnett. "I don't think they're dead for the hardcore player – we're just never going to know because no one is going to release a 2D adventure game any more."

GRAPHICS, SCHMAPHICS


Despite this headlong rush into a new dimension, the various designers are at pains to point out that it isn't all about graphics. Plot is fortunately still seen as paramount in creating a hit. "You could probably bring out a 2D game and, if the story was good enough, no one would bat an eyelid," hazards Woodroffe. "I mean, if you look at *Grim Fandango*, the actual difference between 2D

"If you look through any magazine, most games are full 3D. That's all people appear to be interested in"

SIMON WOODROFFE, DESIGNER, *SIMON THE SORCERER*

and 3D is pretty minimal. But it's a class game because LucasArts have got style pouring out of every orifice."

No one's discounting graphics, though. Charles Cecil sums up the balancing act nicely: "The look is what attracts people immediately and is essential for building up interest in the game. This excitement then needs to be maintained by crafting a plot that draws the player in and keeps them immersed in the world."

So, for better or worse, the traditional 2D adventure seems to have breathed its last. On the plus side, the new crop of 3D games look pretty damned good. Only time will tell if they play the same way. The designers are confident enough – but is the public? 



Name Galleon

Developer Confounding Factor

Publisher Interplay

Website www.confounding-factor.com

Description A tale of pirates, legends and busty women in tight clothing from the ex-*Tomb Raider* team, *Galleon* traverses the line between the two genres very closely. Hopefully it will be as rich in its storyline and puzzles as it is in the visuals.



Name The Real Neverending Story

Developer Discreet Monsters

Publisher TBA

Website www.discreetmonsters.com

Description German-based Discreet Monsters have snapped up the original novel, rather than the film, for inspiration for this cartoony-3D romp. A free-form storyline structure adds to player freedom and a game engine that renders worlds on the fly.



Name Steam

Developer Reflections

Publisher TBA

Website n/a

Description Almost *Unreal* in both look and feel, *Steam* manages to take many of the fluid, fast-moving gameplay elements of a first-person action game, but combines them with traditional adventuring methods in its futuristic, nightmarish tale.



Name Discworld Noir

Developer Perfect Entertainment

Publisher GT Interactive

Website www.perfect-entertainment.co.uk

Description A darker outing for the third game set in Terry Pratchett's comic fantasy world. *Grim Fandango* in style, *Discworld Noir* looks more traditional than the rest, but will serve as a good bridge between the two.



100%

P U R E M A N A G E M E N T

ANCO



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COMPETITION



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Featuring *South Park* favourites

Stan, Kyle, Cartman, Kenny, Chef, Sparky, Mr Hankey, and Big Gay Al (And his *Big Gay Boat Ride*, no doubt – Ed), this mindless collection of PC add-ons is high-on perfect for fans of the infamous cartoon series. So if you know your *South Park*, how about entering this 'shit-hot' competition in the hope of winning yourself a copy, plus a *South Park* video box set worth £34.99 to boot?

Five first-prize winners get a *SPOPCDTSS* CD-ROM (see above) and a *South Park* Video Box Set Volume Three (out

November 30 from Warner Vision). Kick ass! To enter the draw, answer our simple question and send it to us.

Q What material is Mr Hankey made of?

Answers on a postcard to: 'Oh my God, they've digitally re-created Kenny!', PC ZONE, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. Closing date is Friday 27 November, and all the usual compo rules apply.

- ★ Name / Address / Postcode / Daytime phone number / E-mail / Job title / Company name / Age if under 18
- ★ Please tell us if you do not wish to receive details of further special offers or new products from other companies
- ★ Are you a current subscriber to PC Zone?

★ Terms and conditions: Only entries with all the questions completed and received before the closing date will be entered into the prize draw. Winners will be notified by post. No cash alternative. Prizes not necessarily as shown. No correspondence will be entered into. The Editor's decision is final. All the other usual competition rules, conditions and restrictions apply. Get that?

Right.



TELSTAR ELECTRONIC STUDIOS LTD

TOO MUCH WHIZZ

Polish co-developers Chaos Works and Ganymede Technologies are ignoring current in-car trends by opting for an overhead viewpoint for their forthcoming racer *Excessive Speed*. Up to four players can take part in a traditional arcade dust-up, and with seven fully



A nice-looking racing game from Poland.

configurable cars, heat-seeking missiles, earthquakes, tornadoes and freeze rays, the developers appear to have the right idea. Variety comes in the form of five game modes, including a single-player 14-track championship season and a time trial section.

Excessive Speed is available through Iridon in December.



It's doubtful that *Excessive Speed* will make anything more than a minor splash on PC.

SHORTS

DUNGEON KEEPER II SLIPS

The sequel to Bullfrog's award-winning strategy fest has been put back until June 99.

A spokesperson for EA denied that it had anything to do with the departure of the developer's founder Peter Molyneux and maintained that "Bullfrog are perfectionists and getting things absolutely right takes time. We spend an awful lot of time play-testing our games and I think fans of Bullfrog will agree that our games are worth waiting for."

THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING

Russian developers ElectroTECH have announced the April release of *Killer Tank*. Described as "Tank *Carnageddon*", *Killer Tank* sees you racing around a futuristic *Blade Runner*-inspired 3D environment, blowing it up. ElectroTECH say: "this is pure action squinting towards an arcade," and that the on screen carnage will be, "naturalistic or even supernaturally terrible."



BLUFFER'S Guide to...

DIRECTX

★ What is it?

DirectX is an application program interface (API) for producing and controlling graphics and effects in games. It gives direct access to enhanced hardware features under Windows 95/98/NT.

★ Why was it created?

Microsoft created it to enable programmers to write a single version of their product without worrying about the wide range of hardware devices and configurations in existence. Programmers can also take advantage of prepackaged routines and functions without having to write them from scratch.

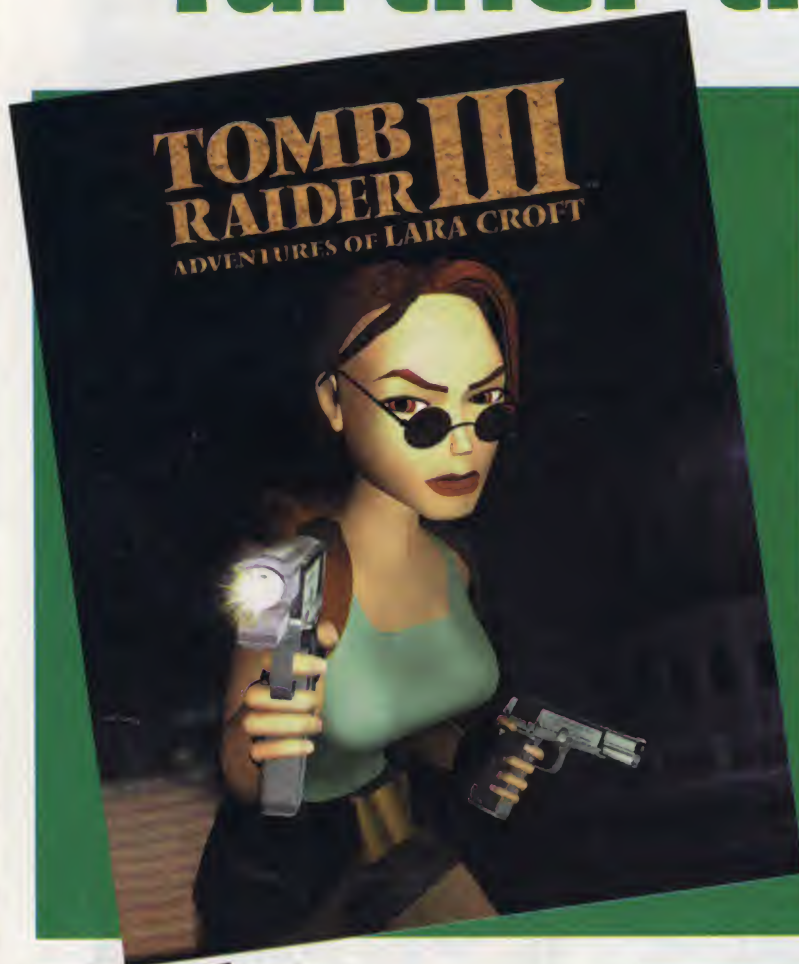
★ How does it work?

The DirectX Software Development Kit (SDK) consists of five distinct elements: *DirectDraw*, for two-dimensional images and textures; *Direct3D*, for creating three-dimensional images; *DirectSound*, for integrating and co-ordinating sound; *DirectPlay*, a plug-in for end users; and *DirectInput*, an interface for input from I/O devices.

★ Where can I find out more about it?

The best place to go is: www.microsoft.com/directx.

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And this time her mission is five times tougher than ever before. Because Tomb Raider III features 5 separate adventures, linking together and offering you a choice of play. Combat is more sophisticated, enemies smarter and more evil than ever. Lara's quest is to retrieve four magical remnants of a vast world that fell to earth in prehistoric times. From the steaming jungles of Asia to the Antarctic wastelands, from the rooftops of London to the dinosaurs of the South Pacific, Lara needs all her new weapons and weapons to keep ahead of the chase.

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PC WORLD

THE COMPUTER SUPERSTORE

PRESTON

PC ZONE heads up north, ditching sunglasses in favour of kagouls...

DEPRESSED Andy Martin



"We are not allowed to speak to you."



"Neither are we."

PLEASE LEAVE THE PREMISES

Preston? Depreston more like – a shining example of town planning gone wrong. Still, can't be all bad – they must play games as much as we do down south... don't they?

Our first venture takes us into the Fishergate shopping centre, where we find Game on the first floor. Unfortunately, the manager is absent, leaving the assistant to inform us that, unlike Game's Manchester and Liverpool shops, he is not allowed to speak to the press. He also refuses to divulge his name. Luckily, we have already ascertained that *Dune 2000* is the game of the moment at 'non-disclosure' Game Ltd, and from the in-store chart it's clear that *Commandos* is still ruling the proverbial roost.

To Electronics Boutique then, situated in St George's shopping centre around the corner. Once

again no manager, and once again the same story regarding 'the press'. It would appear that in the eyes of Head Office, only a shop manager can tell us which games are selling well, leaving other staff to make up the numbers and sell said games with their eyes shut.

Only the vast amount of *Dune 2000* stock lends us a clue that EB is having similar success with it as Game. The absence of a shop 'chart' means we have to count stock for clues: *Commandos* – five copies, *X-Files* – three copies, *Premier Manager* – five copies, everything else – two copies. Budget software doesn't count.

As far as Christmas is concerned, it would be safe to assume that any title requiring a 3D card will shift – just don't ask a sales assistant to tell you that.

WHO LIVES IN A CITY LIKE THIS?



Not tonight – you're not on the list.

MEL HOLDEN
34, plumber

Christmas shopping?

"Yes. Well, the wife is. She thinks I'm in an art shop looking for a print."

When in fact you are...?

"Looking at *Premier Manager* and *Sensible 2000* and trying to decide between the two."

Football is an art form, though, isn't it?

"Try telling the wife that... then wish her a Merry Christmas from Everton FC."



Seven Kingdoms 2 does look a lot better than its predecessor.

THY KINGDOM COME

Thy world be done, on Earth as it is in heaven

CLICKERY POKERY: Keith Pullin

Seven Kingdoms was an epic real-time strategy game. Trevor Chan's follow-up, *Seven Kingdoms 2*, will hope for similar acclaim when it's released through Interactive Magic this spring. Among the improvements is a sinister, more intriguing plot, dozens of new buildings, sumptuous fantasy

graphics, an enormous play area spanning numerous civilisations, and wickedly cunning enemies. In fact, the new, specially improved, savagely intelligent Fryhtans now cover 15 separate species. Guile, persuasion, diplomacy and brute force are just some of the attributes you'll need to succeed. Fantasy? This is real life.



A savage gunfight breaks out in the streets. That's life in *The Creed*.

ESCAPE FROM ALIEN HELL

Having crashed on an alien planet (apparently not unlike our own – convenient, that), the storyline of *Insomnia's The Creed* deals with your attempts to get off the god-forsaken place and back to your homeworld.

Featuring real-time combat over hundreds of pre-rendered locations, *The Creed* allows you to assume the role of either a bounty hunter or an assassin, and to annihilate hundreds of people with a large variety of high-powered weapons (16, to be precise). Character interaction will be very important and over 45 intelligent NPCs will be provided for in-game chat. 3D cards will be fully supported and the game will be out this month through Electronic Arts and Dreamtime Interactive.

Top: £29.99, Selfridges. Jeans: £40, Top Shop.





BERGKAMP
14

10

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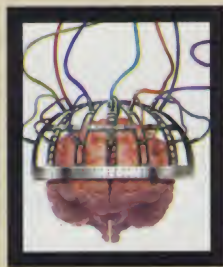






www.easports.com





TECHHEAD

The price of Voodoo2 dips under 100 quid, and an all-singing, all-dancing gamepad

★ WORDS Warren Chrismas

WAR OF VOODOO

TechWorks first with a Voodoo2 board for under £100

TechWorks have taken a lead in the widely anticipated 3D graphics accelerator price war by reducing their 12Mb Power3D² board to just £99.99. This is the first time a top-of-the-range 3Dfx Voodoo2-based accelerator has been available for under £100. Boards based on the same architecture from the likes of Creative, Orchid and Diamond cost around £250 when they were launched this summer.

The significant price reduction is expected to prompt an increase in the

popularity of gamers installing and using two Voodoo2-based boards together in what is known as an SLI (Scan Line Interleave) configuration, a graphics solution heavily backed by 3Dfx in the States with an initiative called 'Power of 2'. Using two Voodoo2 boards together in such a way almost doubles the performance over a single board and enables the use of higher resolutions (1024x768 and above).

Previously beyond the budget of most gamers, an SLI set-up can now be

purchased for under £200. Indeed one dealer, Watford Electronics (01582 745555), is offering special double packs of the Power3D² for around £175.

As predicted in the November issue of *PC ZONE* (Dear Wazza, *PCZ* #69), the cost of 3D graphic accelerators is dropping in the run-up to Christmas thanks to increased competition and the falling price of memory. Other manufacturers, including Diamond and Guillemot, have already reduced the prices of their Voodoo2-based accelerators slightly, with further price cuts possible in the coming weeks.

We'll be taking an in-depth look at the 3D accelerator scene and reviewing all the major boards in the next issue of *PC ZONE*, on sale Tuesday 15 December.

★ TechWorks: 01753 898 500 • www.techworks.com/

SHORTS



DIAMOND'S RIO TAKEN TO COURT IN US

Diamond Multimedia claim that the Rio PMP300, the company's Walkman-style MP3 player (featured in last month's Tech-Head), goes on sale in the UK this month as planned, despite recent battles with the RIAA (Recording Industry Association of America) in US courts.

The RIAA gained a temporary injunction against the sale of the £175 device, claiming that it would bolster digital piracy and harm the music business. This was later overturned when Diamond pointed out that the Rio is not in itself a recording device.

At the time of writing, the UK record industry has yet to make any legal moves.

★ Diamond Multimedia: 01189 444401 •

www.diamondmm.co.uk

EXPLORER SECURITY LEAK

Microsoft have released an update patch for their Windows browser, Internet Explorer 4.01, after discovering a security loophole which, in theory, enables malicious website maintainers to capture information from a Web surfer's hard drive.

The loophole only enables a website to snatch data if it knows an exact path and file name, but many users install programs to default directories, opening the way for the potential capture of common files such as an email address book or website bookmarks. The glitch also enables websites to access data sitting in a user's Windows clipboard.

Despite the seriousness of the problem, Microsoft claim that there have been no reports of users being affected by it. Nevertheless, they advise all users to install the update, which is available at www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/

OUT OF CONTROL?

Another weird-looking gamepad that tries to do too much

★ Cyborg 3D pad • £49.99 • Saitek • 01454 855050 • www.saitek.com

We're not sure who suggested it would be a good idea to make multi-purpose joypads (it certainly wasn't us), but following the all-singing, all-dancing and ultimately over-the-top Xterminator from Gravis (*PCZ* #69, 86%), here comes another one.

Saitek's digital Cyborg 3D Pad, which is about twice the size of a normal joystick, has – are you ready for this? – an analogue mini-joystick, a d-pad with a bizarre steering/rudder control wheel around it and six independent buttons (all controlled with your thumbs) plus two triggers on top (for your fore-fingers). Then, underneath there's a tiny throttle dial and two more triggers (for your middle fingers), plus a further pair of buttons which fall under your last two digits. Confused? You just try using it.

It's actually pretty comfortable to hold thanks to adjustable rubber

grips down the sides, and there are some nice touches including an auto-fire function, a speed adjuster, and a switch which enables you to easily select between Fly, Drive and Arcade modes. There's also a comprehensive – and very good – programming utility provided with several pre-sets, plus various game demos.

But there are several things we don't like too. The mini-joystick is quite awkward to use,

for example, as is the tiny throttle wheel underneath. Oh, and significantly there's no facility for daisy-chaining further controllers. The real issue here though, is why anyone would want so many extra features. We tried it with loads of titles, including *Falcon 4.0* and *F1 '97* (demos of which are provided), plus *Quake II*, and there's no way we'd pay £50 and switch from our usual armoury of joystick, keyboard and mouse.

Our advice? It hasn't changed: if you want a gamepad for action/arcade games, get a standard device like the MS SideWinder pad (*PCZ* #69, 91%). Ultimately, building all these extra features into a joystick is about as sensible as... oh, I dunno – combining a kettle with a tea pot, alarm clock and radio. Actually, whatever did happen to the Goblin Teasmade?

PCZ VERDICT 79%



Saitek CYBORG 3D Digital



Mortyr offers Nazi-splattering in gothic splendour.

POLISH BOMBSHELL

Gott in Himmel! Interactive Magic announce a new 3D shoot 'em up

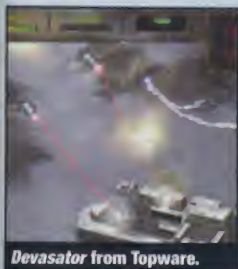
★ WAR CORRESPONDENT Kieth Pullin

Set in a terrifying German fortress during WW2, and featuring authentic guns like the Mauser (which can apparently bore through three people standing in a line), chances are that *Mortyr*, from Polish developers Valhalla, will appeal to body-counting xenophobes everywhere. Graphically, an all-new, never seen before, real-time lighting engine means all active objects have real perspective and moving shadows – even the first-person camera focus is the same as the human eye (17mm – Optics Ed). Sounds weird, but Interactive Magic promise more news soon.



"Call the Bad Taste Police!"

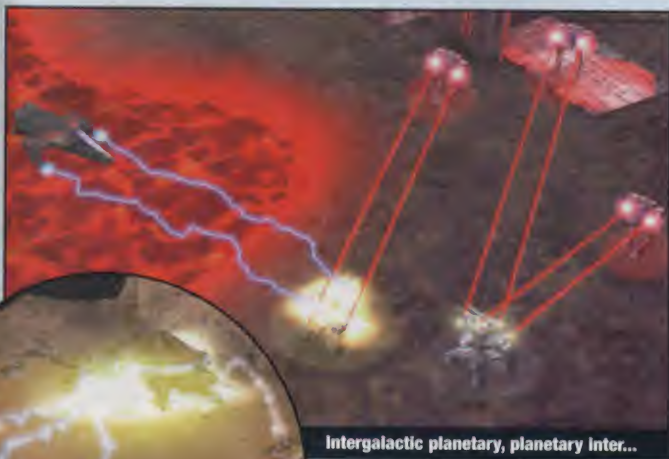
STROPPY SPACE INVADERS



Devastator from Topware.

With characteristic German efficiency, Topware Interactive have yet another futuristic title up their sleeve in the shape of *Devastator*. Set in the interplanetary battlefields of the 21st century, you are strapped into the cockpit of a modern fighting machine and sent to do battle with 'vicious, evil-

tempered invaders from space'. The game promises more than 100 different structures, 60 vehicles and 23 types of weapon. *Devastator* is due in early '99.



Intergalactic planetary, planetary inter...

PLAYSTATION ZONE

Some games only come out on PlayStation. A sad state of affairs that is brought to light here

★ PADDING Paul Mallinson

THE BIG GAME: XENA WARRIOR PRINCESS

History: Sword-swinging TV series that started out on Sky TV and is currently doing the rounds on Channel 5. Now to become a 'sick virtual reality computer game'.

Smells like: First impressions are: "Isn't this *Deathtrap Dungeon*?" Then you realise it's got Lucy Lawless in it and your interest gathers momentum.

Storyline: The story puts Xena and her long-time companion Gabrielle up against their old nemesis, Calisto and Ares, the god of war. The evil duo have raised a three-headed monster called Horrungus, and intend to take over the world with it. Cripes!

Big deal: Some commentators are predicting that Xena will give Lara a run for her money. While we're not getting that carried away, we are secretly looking forward to cutting up some goblins with this particular Amazonian swordstress.

Low point: The TV series isn't much cop, really, is it?

Tech stuff: Twenty full 3D levels, over 100 motion-captured animations for Xena. Overall, fairly run-of-the-mill stuff.

Our impression: We'd like to see this on PC because we're all dirty old bastards.



Xena: booting of bad sorts up-side the head is a distinct possibility.

TWO TO WATCH



Music: over 3,000 individual sounds.



At least the cat won't poop in your shoes.

MUSIC (Codemasters)

Music is not a game, but a genuine dance music and video creation system and, apart from the rather lacklustre *Fluid*, is a first on any video games console. *Music* takes advantage of the PlayStation's impressive 24-channel audio capabilities by offering more than 3,000 individual instrument, percussion and vocal sounds and more than 750 pre-set riffs for you to create your own unique dance tracks with.

RAT ATTACK (Mindscape)

Mindscape's *Rat Attack* is one of those simple but addictive while-away games that even your mum could get into. You're the cat (choose from eight different mogs), and your job is to stun and catch the rats to pick up points along the way. Hitting the rats improperly results in you losing those you've already stocked up, *Sonic* 'rings' stylee. Okay, so it sounds a bit crap, but it isn't – it's a lot of fun.

The Man who KNOWS

A WASTE OF TIME AND EFFORT

Lara Croft and her godforsaken Tomb Raider adventures have been granted Millennium Product status. This farcical state of events came about after Tony Blair apparently challenged businesses to demonstrate that Britain is the creative powerhouse of the world. The news was announced by Trade and Industry Secretary Peter Mandelson at some conference in Birmingham, with Core Design receiving some kind of award. Their Managing Director, Jeremy Smith, was pretty pleased about the whole affair though, smugly announcing: "Tomb Raider is one of the major UK business success stories in the past decade. Its worldwide sales prove that the UK is a major force in the development and distribution of computer games. It is wonderful that acknowledgement of the gaming talent in this country has been recognised. We hope that it will be selected for inclusion in the Millennium Dome." I can't wait.

Still on the subject of 'the world's most famous cyber-babe,' London's Natural History Museum recently hosted the launch party for her third outing. Compere Jonathan Ross thrilled the audience with tales of "Tomb Raider Thwee stawwing Wawa Cwoft" while looking down the arse of an enormous dinosaur. A pretentious short film was screened before everybody got on with the serious business of getting leathered on Eidos' tab. Notable by their absence were the developers of the game, who were invited but unable to attend due to having to finish the difficult third adventure.

In other news, a short film based on Abe's Odyssey is to be submitted for Oscar consideration. It's the first animated short derived from video game footage to be entered for an Academy Award, and follows the adventures of Abe, a character most notable for his ability to tear out farts at will. Lorne Lanning of developers Oddworld Inhabitants gibbered: "This is the latest development in the crossing of video game technology and content into other entertainment media. We utilise a movie production model in developing our games, to include scripts, storyboards, sketches, paintings and character sculptures, and have created a 'digital backlog', essentially a library of high-resolution assets that is easily adapted for feature films." The film has already been shown in LA, and if it ever makes it over here I'm sure there'll be plenty of tickets available.

In more movie/game nonsense, wholly unfounded rumours suggest that early Eighties Schwarzenegger folly Conan is to be resurrected in the form of a game. If the result is anything like the film, expect unadulterated rubbish.

Where did it all go wrong?

BIG RED PLANET RACING



Mars Maniacs: another futuristic race game.

A Mars a day helps you work, rest and play. Of course it doesn't. But this new game does

With a style seemingly lifted straight from *The Fifth Element*, *Mars Maniacs* defines the entry of The Church of Electronic Entertainment into the burgeoning race game arena. This time our thirst for novelty is fed by the irrational melding of 1950s American cars to the floating sleekness of the DeLorian (of *Back To The Future* fame). If you don't believe us, have a look at these unfeasibly suped-up behemoths skimming over a twisting Martian landscape. Unlike the taciturn chocolate confectionery, this game uses recognisable music artists to produce its techno backing tracks. *Mars Maniacs* is available in summer '99.



Graphically, at least, the game looks very promising.



The Church of Electronic Entertainment have spoken.

QUAKE THE FORCE BE WITH YOU

Quake II to get Star Wars treatment

Star Wars: Call Of The Force is an upcoming total conversion for *Quake II*, featuring all-new enemies, weapons and levels. True-to-film locations, controllable vehicles, a skill-based Force system and planets with indigenous populations and unique architecture are just some of the reasons the whole *Quake* world is talking about it. But it doesn't stop there. The programmers are also developing passive characters so you can mill about in crowds or blend into a ship's crew. Keep 'em peeled - it'll be here soon (Unless LucasArts wade in and ruin the party, that is - Ed).

Quake II powered Jawas.



All the vehicles and ships are due for inclusion.

TICKERTAPE

STARTS++ Iguana UK, the British arm of the *Turok* people, are said to be working on a brand new game using the *Shadowman* engine. As yet there are no details on what form the game will take, but the visual dynamics of the engine would suggest a lot of exploration ++STOP++ Sid Meier's Firaxis, currently working on *Sid Meier's Gettysburg* and *Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri*, have signed 'Sid Meier's Two-Game Contract' with John Riccitiello's Electronic Arts. The titles haven't been decided upon yet, but we can probably guess at part of their names ++STOP++ Bioware Corp, about to release *Baldur's Gate* on an unsuspecting world, have confirmed that they are to develop *MDK2* for the Dreamcast console, with a PC version to follow by the end of next year ++STOP++ The minor league big-robot title *Starsiege* is to try and bolster its popularity by holding a contest. Fans are invited to submit personalised skins, art and logos to the developers, and the winners will be included in the latest version of the game, due out any time now ++ENDS

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HOTLINE

Ooh, 'that' day isn't far away now. Whatcha gonna get, then? Oh, and remember: games are for life, not just for Christmas

★ WORDS Andy Martin

NOVEMBER FRI 20TH

Games released today include...

Tomb Raider III (Eidos Interactive) – It'll come as no surprise that, like the Spice Girls' single, this is the bookies' favourite to clinch the Christmas number one slot.



South Park Official Desktop Theme And Screensaver (Telstar) – A highlight of this year's telly, along with *I'm Alan Partridge* and *The Royle Family*. Ideal for office hard drive entertainment.



War Of The Worlds (GT Interactive) – Infinitely better than the TV spin-off based on the

dire album by Jeff Wayne.



Total Annihilation Unit Pack (GT Interactive) – Much-awaited add-on with new units for this classic game. Obviously.

SAT 21ST

Cram in all you can – today is the shortest day of the year.

Among today's game releases are...



Player Manager Season 1998/99 (Anco) – It's hard to believe that 1999 marks the ten-year anniversary of the original *Player Manager* by Dino Dini.

Glover (Hasbro Interactive) – Looks lovely, and apparently plays even better. Considered a possible Xmas hit by some (probably Hasbro).

TUES 24TH

The Playing Fields, Whitfield St, London

– Every Tuesday you can play multiplayer strategy games (*Total Annihilation*, *Red Alert*, *StarCraft*, *Commandos* etc) with a bunch of like-minded people. Teams, free-for-all and the myth of Santa Claus exposed (so they say). Call 0171 383 5850 for more info.

FRI 27TH

Games released today include...



Dark Vengeance (GT Interactive) – Baby. Manger. Inn. Star. Three Wise Men. 3D card. Death. Destruction. Murder. Merry Christmas everybody!



Williams Arcade 2 (GT Interactive) – A must for those of you who WILL NOT be getting a 3D

card in their stocking this Christmas.

Blofreaks (GT Interactive) – One genre that is becoming less and less rare on the PC: the beat 'em up.

Luftwaffe Commander (Mindscape) – Raze London and Coventry with your very own squadron of bombers. Fun, fun, fun!

Enemy Infestation (Funsoft) – Take control of a huge colony and fight off the aliens (true), with non-stop turkey butties and egg nog (lies).



GP 500 (Funsoft) – Not only a very good-looking racer, but also another reason to sing: "Hey, Santa Claus you twat, where's me fuggin' 3D card?"



NICE 2 (Funsoft) – Once again more cars and more fancy visuals to choose from. How could anyone decide to buy it without first reading this publication?

SUN 29TH

The Playing Fields, Whitfield St, London

– Strategy tournament for big prizes: *StarCraft*, *Red Alert* and *Total Annihilation*. Call 0171 383 5850 for more info.

MON 30TH

Among today's game releases is...

Actua Soccer 3 (Gremlin) – A highlight of armchair Boxing Day football to be had here. Recreate the day's matches and make your favoured team win.

DECEMBER WED 2ND

Games released today include...

Baldur's Gate (Interplay) – AD&D brought to life once more. Could prove to be a must for fans of the genre, whether they dress like wizards or not.

FRI 4TH

Among the games released today are...

TOCA 2 (Codemasters) – Another promising



contender for the Christmas top spot, this much-anticipated sequel should fuel the petrol heads for many winter months to come.

Interstate '82 (Activision) – Eighties music and eighties cars. That'll be the sequel to *Interstate '76*, then.

Wild Metal Country (Gremlin) – We love DMA Design's games, and this one looks like continuing that tradition. Tanks that behave like animals? Whatever will they think of next?

SAT 5TH

Time to start thinking about all those Christmas presents you've yet to buy.

MON 7TH

Late-night shopping every night of the week from here on in, boys and girls.

FRI 11TH

Among today's releases are...



Unreal Mega Pack, **Unreal Level Pack**, **Unreal Level Editor** (GT Interactive) –

Clearly the big rival to *Tomb Raider III*. Three reasons to rush your Christmas dinner and opt out of watching the Queen's speech.

TUES 15TH

Ten days to Christmas. Done your shopping yet?

WED 16TH

The Playing Fields, Whitfield Street, London – *Quake II* Capture The Flag takes place every Wednesday from 7pm. Why not go down and show everyone the size of your weapon?

FRI 18TH

The city centre Christmas lights are twinkling, the store detectives are detecting, and everybody's paying for goods on the never-never. Well, it's Christmas, innit?

THU 24TH

CHRISTMAS EVE

Christmas mega-tip: swap the labels on the presents before the family gather to open them up.

FRI 25TH

CHRISTMAS DAY

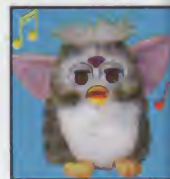
Christmas Day fun: watching mum pretend to be pleased with a fishing rod. Queen's speech at three bells.



SAT 26TH

BOXING DAY

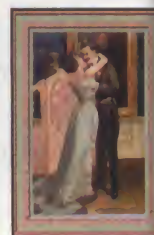
Christmas mega-tip: cut up these little buggers in front of your children and watch them cry.



THU 31ST

NEW YEAR'S EVE

Why not try to slow-dance someone in the direction of the mistletoe? New Year's resolution: phone QVC and tell them you're just having a look around.





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HOTSHOTS

In which **PC ZONE** takes a look at hot new games that will be coming your way soon. This month we've got brand new screenshots from Eidos' *Braveheart* and Interplay's *Galleon*



BRAVEHEART

★ Eidos Interactive • Out March '99

We recently revealed that Red Lemon's *Tartan Army* had been renamed *Braveheart* in light of Eidos securing the movie licence. The game is consequently being tweaked to incorporate elements of the film, characters from which have been faithfully modelled, including William Wallace, Robert the Bruce, Murron, King Edward, Stephen and Hamish. This probably means something to anyone who's ever sat through the film, and fans get the chance to relive the experience, as images, dialogue and scenes are woven into the game. Negotiations are also ongoing to secure direct artistic input from director and star Mel Gibson.

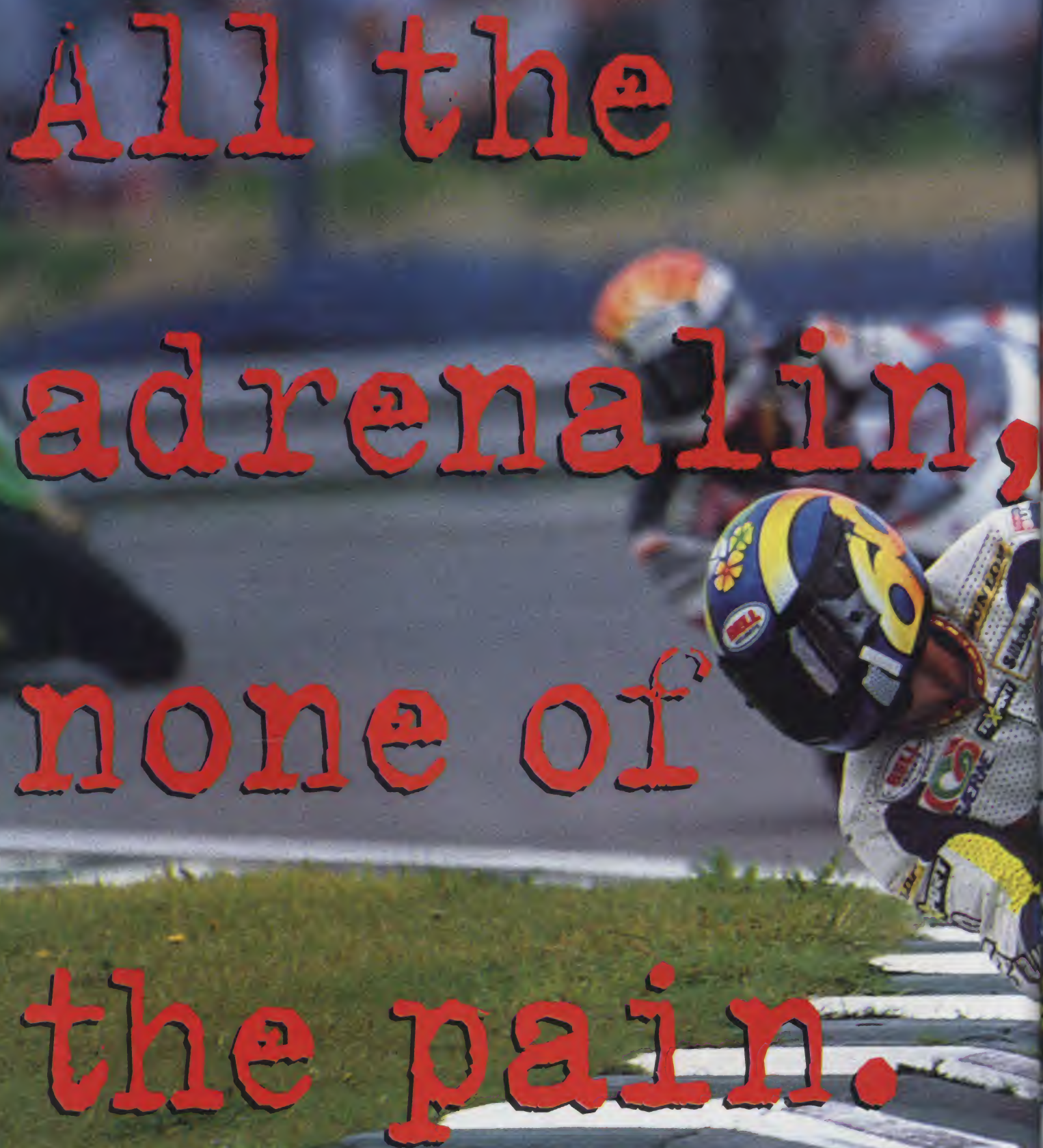


GALLEON

★ Interplay • Out autumn '99

These new in-game *Galleon* screenshots give some indication of what to expect from the people who brought us the original *Tomb Raider*, although what cannot be appreciated here is the animation. *PC ZONE* recently had the chance to see an early version of the game, and we have to say that the character dynamism and movement could quite easily put Disney's own artists to shame. Unbelievably, the whole thing resembles an interactive cartoon, especially when Captain Rhama Sabrier (legendary mariner, warrior, cartographer of uncharted seas, and the game's lead character) starts leaping around like a man with a purpose. Watch out for this one.





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adrenalin,
none of
the pain.

PC CD-ROM



SBK



THE GAME

All we want for Christmas is...

CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 3

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Sports Interactive
PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive
WEBSITE www.computink.co.uk/~champman
OUT February '99

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ It's the third game in the awesomely popular *Championship Manager* series
- ★ It's bigger, faster and more comprehensive than the best-selling *CM2*
- ★ An advanced new engine means you can really go to town with tactics and formations
- ★ There are more leagues, teams and players to manage than ever before



SPORTS INTERACTIVE

The competition's tough, but the Sports Interactive lads done good

- 1991** The original *Championship Manager* is released. It's incredibly slow, but proves to be devilishly addictive. Grahame Kavanagh (FC) is the bargain buy of the year. You mean he's not playing for England?
- 1993** The seasonally adjusted *Championship Manager 93* (PCZ #5, 75%) is released. The incredibly versatile Kim Grant (D/FC) proves to be a worthwhile purchase. Well, Chris Sutton and Dion Dublin don't see much international action either, do they?
- 1996** *Championship Manager 2* (PCZ #31, 92%) is released to rapturous acclaim. It sports a totally new engine and lots of new features. Neil Lennon (AMC) is the best player in the world. He's now at (ahem) Leicester.
- 1997** *Championship Manager 2 96/97* (PCZ #63, 94%) is released. It's harder and sports a few new features. Ibrahima Bakayoko (AMC) is a goal machine. He's now at (ahem) Everton.

- 1998** *Championship Manager 2 97/98* (PCZ #57, 90%) is released along with an editor that enables you to tamper with all the stats. Zhiyi Fan (SW/SC) is a must-have. He's now at (ahem) Crystal Palace.

Better late than never, eh? Potentially better than ever, says *Jeremy Wells*



You no longer have to wait for the CPU to grind through all the thousands of calculations – just click the mouse and you can search for a player or mess around with your tactics while it catches up.

I would have quite seriously sold my grandmother to get my hands on some early playable code of *Championship Manager 3* from developers Sports Interactive. All things considered, granny's not in too bad a condition considering her age: two new hips, slightly deaf and with glasses as thick as the bottom of a pint glass, she's beginning to show signs of slowing down after 70-odd years of service, but she still makes a wicked sausage sandwich and can still be relied upon to stick a fiver in the post come Christmas. Fortunately for my grandfather, the Collyer brothers

weren't in the slightest bit interested in doing a deal, and after lengthy pleading they sent me a playable – though still “very unfinished” – version of *CM3* to have a look at.

SUNDAY LUNCH TIME KICK-OFF

Being a generous sort of chap, I thought it only fair to share such a momentous event with a couple of mates who over the years have proved themselves to be almost as addicted to *Championship Manager* as myself. You may have seen two of them who made an appearance in The Cult Of *Championship Manager* feature in our September issue. Suffice to say that

after installing the game late on Sunday lunchtime, we were still huddled around the PC at around 4am on Monday morning, bleary-eyed, tired, emotional, and still thoroughly absorbed by what was on the screen on front of us.

Here's an ‘as it happened’ and rather babbled report of what we found to be new and different, and a few thoughts as to how it compares to *Championship Manager 2*.

First things first: you can actually choose what nationality you want to be. I was French, as I was going to manage Arsenal (obviously), but you could just as well be an Iraqi if you

THE COLLYER BROS

Championship Manager gurus and general gaming gods Oliver and Paul Collyer step up to the mic

PCZ What was the first game you ever bought?

OLIVER I think it would have to be *Killer Gorilla* for the BBC.

PAUL Probably *Revs*. I've never got into a car game as much as that one.

PCZ What's the best game you've ever played?

OLIVER Probably *Revs* for the BBC.

PAUL *Moonraider* or something like that.

PCZ What was the last game you paid money for?

OLIVER Hmm... I tend to wait for someone else to buy anything first! It was probably *Duke Nukem 3D*.

PAUL *Quake II*. I got through it and thought it was really good – but not as good as *Doom*. *Doom* is the computer game equivalent of Bob Beamon's long jump record.

PCZ What are you playing at the moment?

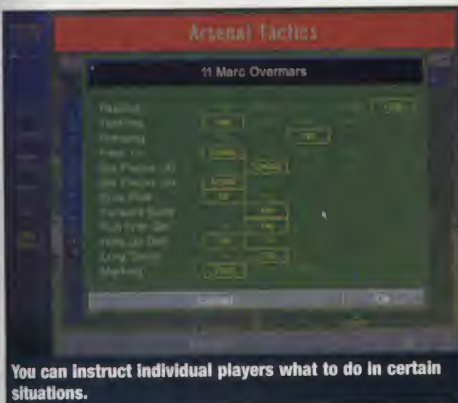
OLIVER I haven't really had the time to try much out – but I'm very much looking forward to *Duke 4 Ever*. I just hope we finish *Champ Man* before it comes out, otherwise we'll have to delay it even further. Only kidding, Eidos!

PAUL Well, I like *World League Soccer*, so much so that we still haven't got *ISS98*. Ov knows he'd lose so he hasn't played it. *Unreal* seemed good, but after *Quake II* I couldn't really be arsed to play it much. I like the look of the weapons in *Half-Life*. But *Duke 4 Ever* will be the one.

PCZ Have you ever been in a fight, and if so when?

OLIVER Yeah, when I was about 12. It was at school and my brother and his mates were egging me on to beat up this guy who was in their year – three years above me. I duly obliged, and everyone was happy except my victim, whom I began to feel really sorry for because he had been humiliated in front of his 'mates'. So if anyone complains about *CM3* in any way, then I'll be ready to fight them!

PAUL No, I just promote Oliver's.



You can instruct individual players what to do in certain situations.

wanted. How this actually affects the game is anyone's guess, though presumably it's in there for a reason. You can also choose what currency the game uses. Each player has a password so others can't tamper with your squad or sell your best players when you're out of the room having a dump or making a cup of tea.

In many ways it all looks different, yet strangely familiar. There are literally hundreds upon hundreds of teams to manage, and you can now try your luck in the Brazilian, Swedish, Argentinean, Japanese and US leagues. Your squad can be huge, and there are loads more players in

the database, each with even more stats to absorb. The consensus here was that there were just too many to look at and that many were in fact very similar, though thankfully the

“Each player has a password so others can't tamper with your squad or sell your best players when you're out of the room having a dump or making a cup of tea”

Collyers have already confirmed that this is something they're looking at.

Players now have a preferred foot, and apparently it really does affect where you play them – play a left-footer on the right wing and he'll tend

to cut in rather than cross the ball. The languages players speak is also indicated, as is their performance rating for their last five games – very useful. Friendly match ratings are

now also logged, as are continental and international games. Penalties taken and converted are recorded, and loads more players have accurate histories, so if you hear of a player who's lighting up the Argentinean

league, you can look him up and impress your mates with your newfound knowledge.

Tactically, there's a huge leap in what you can do. As well as any number of formations, you can instruct your team to play in various different ways, and even instruct individual players to make runs, hold the ball up, run into space and mark an opposition player. Contracts are much more sophisticated too. And you can now employ scouts and back-room staff to help you. Even Jimmy Hill is available as a scout if you want him. Unfortunately, our version had no scouting and player search,



At first glance it's all quite different, yet strangely familiar.



Visually it's pretty easy on the eye considering the amount of information on-screen at once.



'Windows-style' drop-down menus enable you to navigate your way around with relative ease.



Shearer is a snip at just £19 million. Well, he's coming to Arsenal anyway, isn't he?



Tell your players where you want them when you've lost possession in various positions on the pitch.



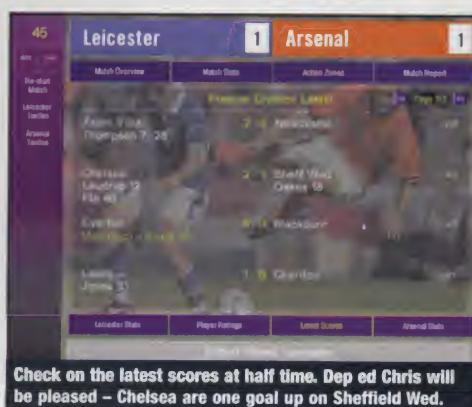
Check out the action zones to see how your team is performing.



When you've got the ball, it's up to you where your ten outfield players are.



Tactically, there's lots more scope, and the numerous filters make sorting your team a lot easier.



Check on the latest scores at half time. Dep ed Chris will be pleased - Chelsea are one goal up on Sheffield Wed.



The match screen will be familiar to Championship Manager 2 fans.

← finance screens, training, player retirements, international friendlies, under-21s, B-teams and back-room staff, so obviously we can't comment on these areas yet.

THE STORY SO FAR

From what we've seen so far, it's all pretty accurate and there are no really nasty surprises. Experimenting with the tactics takes ages, though after playing a couple of dozen games it's pretty clear that the decisions you make here do affect what goes on during a match. More play will reveal exactly how much and only time will tell how much of a difference it really makes. Essentially though, it's potentially better than CM2 (and every other football management

game, come to that) in almost every way. To say we were impressed is a bit of an understatement. It's also life-sappingly addictive, and Eidos really should consider putting some kind of health warning on the box.

TIME TO GO HOME

As the birds began to sing, we finally decided to call it a day and re-convene later that day after the essential distractions of sleep, work, talking to other people etc were accomplished.

Many CM fans, myself included, had expressed fears that the Collyers couldn't possibly pull it off a third time; they'd mess it up - do too much or too little, make the interface too complicated or the game too easy in

an effort to appeal to an even wider audience. We needn't have worried. From what we've seen so far, CM3 looks like exceeding all expectations.

“From what we've seen so far, CM3 looks like it will exceed all expectations. I really just can't wait to get my hands on a finished copy”

Sure, it's not perfect, and there's still a lot to do, but I really just can't wait to get my hands on a finished copy.

In all honesty, I'm a little bit scared about what will happen. It's almost as if I don't want the Collyers to ever

finish the game, because I know that once it's on my hard drive it will all begin again like some crazy, mixed-up love affair that's bordering on an obsession and spiralling out of control. I won't be able to concentrate on anything else. I'll find a dozen excuses not to leave the house; my complexion will become pallid and large bags will form under my bloodshot eyes; real life and reality will once again become a blur as I scour the sports pages for the briefest hint of new talent; every conversation will end up being about Championship Manager.

My life will be in ruins - again. Oh, who am I trying to kid? Just hurry up and finish the damn thing! Nothing else matters. **CM**

Wednesday 25.11.98 EVE

17. Emmanuel Petit (Arsenal)

Action

Profile	Injuries & Bans	Contract	Transfer	History
Born 22.9.70 (Age 28). French (27 caps/2 goals).				
Acceleration	13	Handling	8	Stamina
Adaptability	6	Heading	13	Strength
Aggression	15	Influence	11	Tackling
Agility	14	Jumping	12	Teamwork
Anticipation	14	Marking	13	Technique
Balance	9	Off the ball	9	Versatility
Bravery	14	Pace	15	Work Rate
Creativity	14	Passing	13	Preferred Foot
Crossing	11	Positioning	15	Form
Determination	17	Reflexes	8	Morale
Dribbling	10	Set Pieces	14	Condition
Faith	13	Shooting	11	

	Apps	Cl	Com	Fins	Ass	Yel	Red	MoM	As R
Non Competitive	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	7.33
League	9	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	7.00
Cup	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7.00
Continental	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6.00
International	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	6.00

Defensive Midfielder (Centre)

Back

Each player has even more stats to wade through.

Arsenal transfer bid for Owen

Liverpool's Michael Owen is currently valued at £17,500,000. Your board will allow transfer fees up to £25,500,000.

Transfer Fee	-	£17.5M	+	=
Monthly Installments	-	6 months	+	
Percentage of Next Sale	-	10%	+	
Fee after 10 League Apps.	-	£4.4M	+	
Fee after 10 International Apps.	-	£4.4M	+	
Transfer Date		Immediate		
Make transfer bid public		Yes		

Exchange

Total Value £26,300,00

Contracts are now a lot more complicated and include selling-on fees and money for international appearances.

Wednesday 25.11.98 EVE

10. Ian Wright (West Ham)

Action

Profile	Injuries & Bans	Contract	Transfer	History
Born 3.11.63 (Age 35). English (27 caps/7 goals).				
Acceleration	15	Handling	7	Stamina
Adaptability	6	Heading	11	Strength
Aggression	15	Influence	16	Tackling
Agility	14	Jumping	7	Teamwork
Anticipation	14	Marking	6	Technique
Balance	14	Off the ball	14	Versatility
Bravery	16	Pace	20	Work Rate
Creativity	13	Passing	11	Preferred Foot
Crossing	9	Positioning	13	Form
Determination	20	Reflexes	5	Morale
Dribbling	12	Set Pieces	8	Condition
Faith	13	Shooting	15	

	Apps	Cl	Com	Fins	Ass	Yel	Red	MoM	As R
Non Competitive	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	7.00
League	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6.75
Cup	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	7.50
Continental	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6.00
International	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6.00

Striker (Centre)

The player search facility is yet to be implemented, though you can still type in any name, player or country if you know who you're after.

REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL

Championship Manager 3 looks like being better than *CM 97/98* in every way. Here are ten reasons why it could potentially be the best football management sim ever

- 1 It's quicker than ever before. Even the most die-hard *CM2* fan would confess to getting a little marked as the game number-crunched its way through thousands of stats. *CM3* uses a completely new engine – it's no longer DOS-based and processes the data a lot quicker. Phew!
- 2 You can now mess around with your team, tactics, and even scour the transfer market while the CPU is calculating all the match results, which means you're never waiting with nothing to do for the game to update.
- 3 Tactically there's more scope than ever before. You can now give your team detailed instructions as to how you want them to play and then give each individual player specific instructions, such as where you want them to pass the ball, whether they should move up for set pieces, and even mark a specified opposition player. The new tactics engine also enables you to specify players' positions when you have the ball or lose possession. You can also save these tactics and load them up at will – even during a match. Which is nice.
- 4 The addition of reserve teams and the facility to train and develop young players gives you much more scope than ever before. You don't have to spend hours scouring the transfer market for gems; you can now nurture your own stars of the future, which is good news if you like to manage clubs with a cash flow problem.
- 5 The interface is a joy to use. With so much information to sift through and absorb, if the interface is in any way difficult or fiddly to use, navigating your way around the game can be an absolute nightmare. Thankfully, *CM3's* interface carries on where *CM2's* left off. It's easy to read, instantly familiar, and the new 'Windows-style' drop-down menus mean that a lot of info is instantly accessible at a simple click of the mouse. Numerous filters mean that you can now sort your players more efficiently. And unlike so many other management games, if you double-click on a player or team at any point, their stats instantly appear on-screen. If you do get lost, just click on the 'back' button and it takes you back through the screens you opened.
- 6 The network game is potentially fantastic. Okay, not everyone has access to a LAN, but playing against other people using other machines is just great. There's no internet facility as yet, though this is believed to be the number one priority for *CM4*, which will probably see the light of day some time in the next millennium.
- 7 The sheer number of players, teams and leagues on offer is astounding. No other game goes into such detail, and although some of the stats and values were a little off the mark in this version, the Colliers' track record for producing a competent database means that *CM3* will feature the most comprehensive and accurate stats ever seen in a football management game.
- 8 You can now really go to town with player contracts. Now, you not only negotiate the price of a player, but also the signing on fee, assist bonuses, goal bonuses, numerous clauses, a selling on fee percentage, a fee after ten league appearances, a fee after international appearances etc. It really is a lot more involved.
- 9 That god-awful commentary has been replaced – there's now a new, more precise text-based commentary. If you get bored with that you can look at the latest results of other matches being played at the same time, look at the action zones, check out your players' ratings, and even watch as a minute-by-minute report of the game records just about every incident.
- 10 There really is too much to talk about. Wait for our EXCLUSIVE review in the February issue of *PC ZONE* (on sale Friday 15 January) to find out more.

Enter the dragons. Here be...



Verunan ships under attack from a Taros... er, insect-type thing.



The D-Day landings – circa 1344.

Expect the world of Darien to feature a range of environments.



TOTAL ANNIHILATION: KINGDOMS

A flatulent, cross-dressing **Richie Shoemaker**, astride a flying, fire-breathing dragon, brings new meaning to the phrase 'drag and drop'

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Cavedog
PUBLISHER GT Interactive
WEBSITE www.cavedog.com/ta-kingsdoms/
OUT March '99

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ There hasn't been a decent fantasy RTS game since *WarCraft II*. (Except *Magic And Mayhem* – Ed)
- ★ 160 unit types and four very different sides to choose from.
- ★ More freely available units from Cavedog's website
- ★ 3D hardware support
- ★ Greater emphasis on the single-player game, and enhanced multiplayer options

CV



CAVEDOG

You can get a great reputation from just a single game; living up to it is a different matter

- 1995** LucasArts adventure guru Ron Gilbert founds Cavedog Entertainment along with Shelley Day.
- 1997** *Total Annihilation* (PCZ #70, 93%) is released. (The awards are still pouring in.)
- 1998** Two expansion packs are released: *TA: Core Contingency* (PCZ #66, 87%) and *TA: Battle Tactics* (PCZ #68, 74%). One is very good, the other is just good.
- 1999** *TA: Kingdoms* will precede three more Cavedog releases: *Good & Evil*, *Elysium* and *Amen*. Expect an expansion pack by the end of the year.
- 2000** With a bit of luck we'll see the likes of *Total Annihilation II* (and if Ron Gilbert had the money to buy back the licence, *Monkey Island 4*).

First off, let's get one thing straight: *TA: Kingdoms* isn't just *Total Annihilation* (PCZ #70, 93%) with swords and sorcery in place of robots and tanks. If we were to believe Ron

Gilbert, head of Cavedog Entertainment, *TA: Kingdoms* is a whole new game.

With *TA*, Cavedog took the traditional real-time strategy game by the short and curlies and pulled down very hard. So hard, in fact, that Westwood, creators of *Command & Conquer* (PCZ #28, 95%), are still clutching their collective nuts and squealing in the background.

Westwood may have started the war, but Cavedog won the latest battle, making *TA* one of the best games of the last two years. The next stage is imminent, and although Cavedog refuse to be goaded into a war of words, he's willing to talk openly about his own games.

"They're both different," says Ron, of *Total Annihilation* and *Kingdoms*. "I think that the whole fantasy aspect will be a big draw. It's really popular, in some ways maybe more popular than a traditional wargame like *C&C*. I don't think you'll be able to compare the two. Some people hated *WarCraft* (PCZ #22, 70%) and loved *C&C*, and the same the other way around."

Looking at the success of *TA*, it was obvious that a fantasy interpretation was bound to appear eventually. The game engine has yet to be surpassed, and to not update it for a fantasy setting would have been a crime. The first problem that becomes apparent is this: how on earth can Cavedog create believable organic units from

ANNIHILATION: KINGDOMS



an engine developed for angular metallic monstrosities? The answer is long-winded and boring; the result is that they have. The movement of the flying dragons is incredibly realistic, as their wings flap consistently depending on their speed. Watching the foot soldiers walk around is equally impressive – like watching a 64-player *Quake II* deathmatch from an armchair in the clouds.

Now, I love *TA* to death, but its single-player campaign missions are pretty dull; skirmishing is where the action is. The question is: will Cavedog deliver a decent single-player game apart from a multiplayer practice mode?

"Yeah, if there was one aspect of *TA* that I was disappointed with, it

“Watching soldiers walk around is like watching a 64-player *Quake II* deathmatch from an armchair in the clouds”

was the single-player missions,” concedes Ron. “It lacked a really compelling story. In *Kingdoms* we’ve got a much more complex story that drives its way through the missions. We’re structuring the game differently as well: we’re not doing the game as 15 missions per side, but as one continuous stream of missions, alternating the sides that you’re playing against.”

MAGIC AND MAYHEM

Unlike *TA*’s two almost identical sides, *Kingdoms* features four. The Aramons have a regular medieval flavour and feature such fantasy stalwarts as knights, foot soldiers and catapults. Their reliance on magic is low, favouring technological might to defeat the foe. Veruna is a

predominately water-based world whose navies are the core element in its fighting force. The Zohn are the flying specialists. And the Taros are demonic, fire-loving anarchists. Each race battles it out over Darien, the world on which the game is based.

Now it would be folly to describe even a few of the 160 planned units, but there are some interesting new elements that need to be discussed. The first is that resource collecting is gone. Yes, gone. The only thing to worry about here is mana, or magical energy, to power up those fireball spells. Some units sweat mana while others absorb it. ‘Sacred sites’ are the key to success.

“The whole idea about not having resources was very appealing to us,” says Ron. “Initially we thought, no way, you gotta have resources. But then, as we started thinking about it, we asked ourselves do we really need resources? I think resources are one of those things that nobody has stepped back and questioned the need for. People include them because the last game had them. When people actually sit down and play *Kingdoms* and they don’t realise they have to micro-manage their resources, they’re gonna like it a lot.”

NIGHTMARE FEATURES

When it first arrived, *TA* was put head to head against Activision’s *Dark Reign* (PCZ #56, 89%). Both games were well received, but *TA*’s polygon units and emphasis on frantic action made it the clear winner. *Dark Reign II* has now gone full 3D. Isn’t *TA: Kingdoms* falling behind in the technology wars?

“We had a version working in full 3D,” says Ron, “but we decided to back away from that. If you move the camera up or left and right, you really take processing power away from the



RON GILBERT



Eight years at LucasArts and responsible for such hits as *Maniac Mansion* and *Monkey Island 1 and 2*, Ron Gilbert left to form Humungous Entertainment and Cavedog. The boy’s done well

PCZ What was the first game you ever played?

RON Probably the old arcade games – *Asteroids* and *Pac-Man*. The first home computer game I ever remember getting into was *Jump Man* on the Commodore 64.

PCZ What games are you playing at the moment?

RON *Commandos* – the first few levels are way too hard – and *Knights And Merchants*.

PCZ What’s the best game you’ve ever played?

RON That’s a difficult one. I’ll tell you what I’m most looking forward to though.

PCZ Oh, go on then.

RON *Grim Fandango*.

PCZ Have you ever been in a fight, and if so why?

RON Er, not since I was about eight years old. I’ve blanked it from memory.

AI, and you need a really fast machine. I think it’s too early for us to take the 3D route. In the future, when everyone has the hardware, we may come back to it.”

Although *Kingdoms* remains essentially a 2D top-down game, looking at previous attempts at full 3D it’s difficult not to agree that the time is not yet right. Anyway, there are a whole host of new features and enhancements that look set to build upon *TA*’s strengths. For example: enhanced line of sight, where units on hilltops see further, and even enhance the visual range of nearby units; healing units will automatically go to work on nearby casualties, and some enemy units will naturally

induce negative effects on the enemy on account of them being grotesque or frightening; in multiplayer games and skirmishes, rushing will be out, as fortifications will be immune to regular fire, needing something heavier to break them down. Conversely, some higher level units – The Seven Knights of the Sky, for instance – will be limited to... er, (*Seven? – Ed*). One of the most exciting features we’ve yet to see is that each player may be visited by their ‘patron deity’, a powerful god whose power will be at the player’s disposal for a limited time. Can you imagine it? It’ll be like King Kong and Godzilla exchanging blows at Gallipoli. It’ll rock. Man. ☑

You need more than a few knights and archers to storm castles.



Move over, Teddy Sheringham, here comes

MICHAEL OWEN'S WORLD LEAGUE SOCCER '99



'The boy Owen' doing what he does best.

The boy Owen is certainly doing the business for England, but can he do the same for Eidos? *Steve Hill* chats to those in the know



"She's a legend in computer games, and hopefully I can become as big as her one day" – Michael Owen on Lara Croft.



The players' hairstyles seem to have improved from the flat-tops of WLS '98. There are also a few chin-gloves to be found.

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Silicon Dreams
PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive
WEBSITE www.eidos.com
OUT Christmas '98

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ The deal doesn't get much bigger than Michael Owen
- ★ New stadiums
- ★ Updated player and team statistics
- ★ A new front end
- ★ Improved floodlights?

In the first game, headers were great. This still seems to be the case, with this player getting plenty of purchase.



Regular readers will recall Eidos swooping on the player who will forever be known as The Young Michael Owen. They're pretty chuffed with the deal, Eidos chairman and erstwhile goblin writer Ian Livingstone boasting: "I am perhaps the envy of every football manager in the world, having signed Michael Owen, the best footballer in the world, undoubtedly. We're delighted that Michael has chosen *World League Soccer* to endorse."

But what of Owen himself? Apart from the obvious reason, why did he choose to work with Eidos? "I think there were a number of companies that I could have picked, but Eidos was the most appealing," he

says. "They wanted to make the game as real as possible as well as have me influence what the game comes out like, so that was really the main reason. It's great to be able to put your name towards computer games; it's something I wanted to do and something I'm glad to have done."

Owen obviously knows more than a little about football, but can a mere video game ever compare to the real thing? "Every computer game is trying to be as realistic as possible, trying to bridge the gap between playing a computer game and playing a real-life game of football. I think Eidos will come closest to that and it should be a good game to play."

Owen is certainly no games virgin, and actually bought a copy of WLS '98, having played games for years. "I started when I was reasonably young. Obviously I can't really spend

as much time out of the house now (*Oh, the price of fame – Ed*) so recently I've been using the computer a bit more. Hopefully with this new game I'll be stuck to it."

Clearly, Owen will be picking himself in the England side, but his choice of striking partner also causes no surprises. "I think Robbie Fowler would be a good one to pick because he's back from injury now. It's nice to have Robbie back training again, and I think he'd be my ideal partner."

OWING OWEN

Michael Owen's World League Soccer '99 is being developed by Silicon Dreams, as was WLS '98. Robert Palfreman, senior producer of the game, describes his experience of working with Owen: "Michael was very professional, very focused, and it became clear during the times he



Hopefully the tackling system won't be as crude as in the first effort.



Commentary is again provided by Ray Wilkins and Peter Brackley.



Evening games will feature the sun setting, necessitating use of floodlights.



That'll be offside, in case you were in any doubt.

visited us that he was here to do a job. It really was like working with an 'old head on young shoulders', and I think that this is reflected in the mood of his interviews when he's on TV. Once we had broken the back of the job, and he became more familiar with the environment, he did lighten up – even to the extent where he had his photo

animations for the players who have been fouled, as well as those who are lying or rolling on the ground in a German fashion.

"Time has been taken to improve both the outfield players' AI as well as the keepers'. For the more skilled games player we've now incorporated extra skill moves. This enables the

fact that the team itself consists of hardened footie fans. This is now the sixth soccer product from the Silicon Dreams stable. As a team, and personally, we prefer a football game to provide us with a far greater challenge than that of FIFA."

So what do you think is the definitive football game across all platforms, and why?

"Sensible Soccer on the Amiga, just for sheer playability."

Correct. But are there too many footie games available at the moment?

"No, you can never get enough of football. After all, in the words of Sir Bobby Charlton, it's God's game."

It certainly is. And if some pundits are to be believed, Michael Owen is God's footballer. Let's hope his game is equally good. **PCZ**

“We prefer a football game to provide us with a greater challenge than that of FIFA”

ROBERT PALFREMAN, OF MOWLS '99 DEVELOPERS SILICON DREAMS

taken with every member of the SD staff. All in all, a top bloke."

Very nice, but will putting his mug on the box really make it a better game? "WLS '99 is a great game. As you may have noticed from WLS '98, it's really aimed at the hard-core gamer, as opposed to someone who wants a bit of fun. Michael's endorsement will give the product a much greater shelf appeal and inevitably provide a greater challenge to a larger audience."

So what are the major improvements from WLS '98? "Even greater emphasis has been placed on the player skinning technology. This prevents any breaking up of the player polygons and gives the gameplay a much slicker look, which obviously adds even greater realism. All the correct players names have been included, and all the kits have been updated throughout the domestic and international leagues, along with the introduction of new stadia. We've also included new

player to use any one of the 23 combination moves to outstrip and outplay his/her opponent. And there's been a revamp on the commentary, as well as an enhancement to the crowd animations. Would you like me to go on?"

Er, no. Will WLS '99 feature a new game engine, or has it merely been tweaked? "No, the WLS engine hasn't really been tweaked, it's gone through a complete overhaul. It has been optimised to run in higher resolution, and the G-shading and skinning technology now give the product a highly polished finish."

WORLD CUP WILLY

As far as we at ZONE are concerned, the most recent office favourite footie game is *World Cup '98*. The Silicon Dreams team have also had a dabble, but weren't that impressed.

"Yes, all members of the team have played all the versions of FIFA. This was for two reasons: obviously for research purposes, but also due to the

Q&A

ROBERT PALFREMAN



The operations manager of Silicon Dreams and senior producer for MOWLS '99 faces the music

PCZ What was the first game you ever played?

ROBERT First game was Doctors and Nurses; the first computer game was *Pong*.

PCZ What's the best game you've ever played?

ROBERT *Elite* on the BBC.

PCZ What was the last game you paid money for?

ROBERT The last game I paid for was *Final Fantasy VII*.

PCZ Have you ever been in a fight, and if so what happened?

ROBERT I've had more fights than I care to remember. Inevitably what happened with the majority of them was that the Old Bill turned up. This was due mainly to the fact that I worked as a doorman in Telford for two years – very Cornish pastie.

CV



SILICON DREAMS

No strangers to sports games, and footie games in particular

1985 Debut with *Fever Pitch* on the Super Nintendo and Sega MegaDrive.

1996 *Olympic Soccer* released for the PC, PlayStation, Saturn and 3DO.

1996 *Olympic Games* continues the theme on the PC, PlayStation and 3DO.

1997 *Soccer '97* appears on the PlayStation only.

1998 *World League Soccer '98* proves more of a success on PlayStation than on the PC.

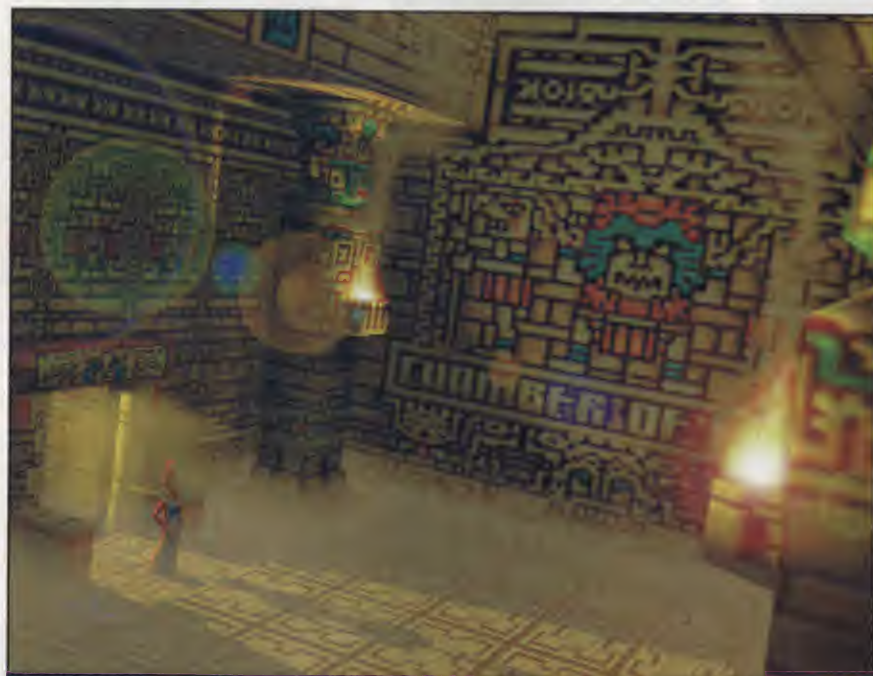
The AI of the goalkeepers has been tweaked, as this competent smothering of the ball demonstrates.



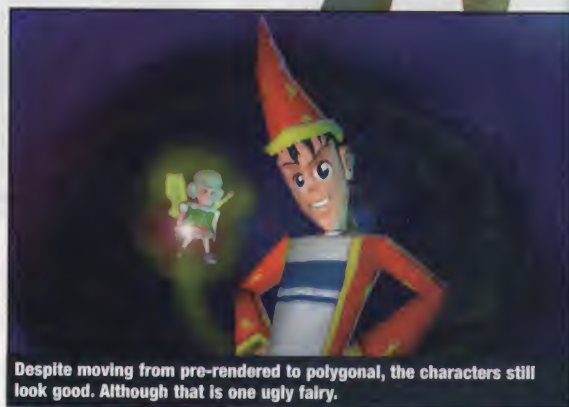
Get your magic wand out for...

SIMON THE SORCERER 3D

Pointy hats, long beards, magic spells... *Paul Presley* really should wear a suit sometimes



The 3D world is both large and constantly active, à la *Quake*-style action games.



Despite moving from pre-rendered to polygonal, the characters still look good. Although that is one ugly fairy.



The previous, 2D version of the game used traditional pre-rendered characters such as these. *Simon 3D* keeps the style, but not the look.

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Headfirst Productions

PUBLISHER Adventuresoft

WEBSITE www.adventuresoft.com

OUT Mid-'99

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ Impressive 3D *Prince Of Persia* engine
- ★ Multiple puzzle solutions and story endings
- ★ Intelligent camera movements help create a film-like atmosphere
- ★ *Simon The Sorcerer* has a good pedigree with adventurers

Adventuresoft have learned their lessons the hard way. Having admitted making mistakes with *The Feeble Files*, they next realised they'd misjudged the direction adventure games were heading. Having spent almost a million pounds and finished more

than 70 per cent of the artwork and design for *Simon The Sorcerer 3*, it came as a bit of a shock to realise they couldn't find a publisher interested in 2D adventure games. Consequently the game was scrapped and work started again on a spanking new 3D version, using the *Prince Of Persia 3* engine. "It was a bit of an emotional day when I broke the news to the team," admits Mike Woodroffe, Adventuresoft's Managing Director.

Still, the result is a new *Simon The Sorcerer* adventure that looks stunning, and a company that is now extremely positive about their future. Not that they have any delusions of grandeur. "We don't have the resources of LucasArts," says Simon Woodroffe, *Simon 3D*'s Creative Director and Mike's brother, "where you can get a game out in nine months and then switch styles again. We have to aim for the future and

hope that it's caught up by the time we get there."

Simon 3D certainly looks like a game of tomorrow. The 3D engine is extremely impressive, enabling masses of texturing detail, and

"We have to aim for the future and then hope that it's caught up by the time we get there"

SIMON WOODROFFE, CREATIVE DIRECTOR

they've even managed to avoid the standard 3Dfx 'close-up blurring' syndrome. What we get is a 3D engine that manages to make even games like *Unreal* look bland.

Simon 3D has a fully active world to explore, rather than static locations that are only used when you walk into them. "It's all necessary for creating a

good atmosphere," explains Simon. "That's what adventures need more than anything, that attention to detail, the polish to give them a real bloody atmosphere that drags you into the game and makes you feel like you're part of the environment, that it's really happening."

THIS IS THE END

There will also be at least four different endings, all reliant on the way you solve the game's puzzles. Multiple solutions don't just mean that the same puzzle can be solved in slightly different ways, but that most puzzles actually have different outcomes depending on your actions.

It's still a long way off – *Simon 3D*'s release date isn't till next year – but it's already looking like one of the favourites in the 3D adventure game race. And there are a lot of competitors. [E2]

The Rise of Rome took 520 years.*

*Your results may vary.



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Slithering into the pits with...



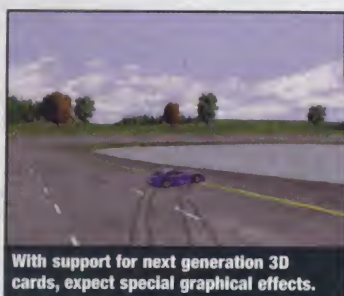
Papyrus have used their experience in developing the *IndyCar* and *NASCAR* series of games to good effect.

VIPER RACING

Does the PC really need any more racing games? It does when they look like this, says **Jeremy Wells**



With three levels of realism, the game should appeal to *Screamer* and *TOCA* fans.



With support for next generation 3D cards, expect special graphical effects.



With a 'ghost car' facility, you can save your best laps to trade over the Internet.



The finished game comes with a paint kit so you can customise your car.

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Papyrus
PUBLISHER Sierra Sports/Cendant Software
WEBSITE www.sierrasports.com
OUT December '99

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ *Gran Turismo*-style career mode that enables you to upgrade your car
- ★ Three levels of realism, from sim to arcade
- ★ Awesome 3D-accelerated graphics and innovative 'organic' opponent AI system

The PC as a platform has never been short of pukka racing games. *Need for Speed III: Hot Pursuit* (PCZ #69, 91%) is arguably the best in terms of features and graphics, although anybody with a PlayStation who owns a copy of *Gran Turismo* will laugh in your face if you

As your eyes will have already informed you, *Viper Racing* certainly looks the business, and if the hype is to be believed it will give PC owners something to shout about the next time their console-owning chums start mouthing off about *Gran Turismo*.

Support for the latest 3D accelerator cards, which enables some rather special new graphical effects – such as tyre burn-outs, transparent car windows and environment-mapped cars – coupled with an advanced damage model that enables you to scratch and dent your car, should be more than enough to start mouths watering. A feature-laden career mode that enables you to gradually upgrade your car, sophisticated racing telemetry analysis, full multiplayer LAN/Internet capability and an

“*Viper Racing* looks the business, and if the hype is to be believed, will give PC owners something to shout about the next time their console-owning chums start mouthing off about *Gran Turismo*”

attempt to justify any kind of creditable comparison.

It comes as no surprise, therefore, to see that at least one PC developer, in this case driving aficionados Papyrus – the people responsible for the excellent *IndyCar Racing* (PCZ #10, 93%) and *NASCAR Racing* (PCZ #46, 92%) – are currently putting the finishing touches to a game that cocks its hat in the general direction of Sony's über-racer.

innovative 'organic' AI system should convince console-twiddlers that it's time they ditched their TV toys and started saving up their spending money for a PC pretty sharpish.

Papyrus' track record (ahem) for producing top-quality racing games should be enough to convince even the most sceptical gamer that *Viper Racing* will be worth at least a momentary glance when it's released at the end of this year. And you can rest assured that we'll be following this little beauty's progress very carefully indeed. [A]



A super-realistic physics mode enables you to dent and scratch your car.



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where genetic experiments resulted in the rebirth of history's most savage predators.
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You soon realize... you're not.**

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FIRST ENCOUNTER

TUROK 2: SEEDS OF EVIL

Jurassic Park!

Steve Hill gets ready Turok

(to rock – geddit?)

Oh, never mind)

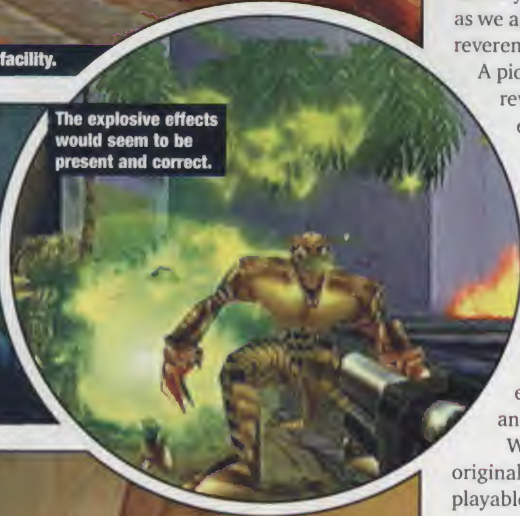


Many of the weapons have a sniping facility.



Hand-to-hand combat plays its part, with the addition of nifty fingerware.

The explosive effects would seem to be present and correct.



The Flame-thrower takes no prisoners, leaving bodies charred beyond recognition.

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Iguana
PUBLISHER Acclaim
WEBSITE www.acclaimnation.com
OUT Christmas '98

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ Real-time body-impact physics
- ★ Soft-skinned enemies
- ★ Even more ludicrous storyline
- ★ The first game was great

When the original *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter* (PCZ #58, 90%) first washed up on the *PC ZONE* shore, it was quite literally met with "ooh"s and "ahh"s as we all stood slack-jawed in reverence at its graphical splendour.

A pioneer of the 3D accelerator revolution, it dazzled us with its extreme detail, elaborate coloured lighting, and ludicrous pyrotechnic

middle distance becomes enveloped in 'a right old pea-souper', making spatial awareness problematic to say the least. There has been plenty of time to rectify this since then though, and if the review copy arrives with even the merest hint of condensation, it's liable to be laughed mercilessly out of the office.

The other notable aspect of *Turok* was its ridiculous array of weaponry, rapidly progressing from a kitchen knife, through some unlikely armaments, and culminating in the frankly absurd Chronoscepter, a piece capable of tearing holes in the fabric of the space-time continuum.

Turok 2 should not disappoint, and we are promised more of the same, with some 24 weapons including such scary-sounding apparatus as the War Blade, Scorpion Missile Launcher, Firestorm Cannon, Sunfire Pod Launcher, Cerebral Bore and Storm Bow. A tranquilliser gun is also

“There's even the opportunity to straddle a triceratops with its own 20mm cannon, which certainly isn't something you get to do every day”

effects. But that was then, and this is now.

While a cursory look at the original game still reveals a very playable experience, it is dogged by an unacceptable degree of fogging, some levels proving more reminiscent of a Tuesday evening in Rotherham than of an exotic lost civilisation. The indoor sections are generally alright, but outside, anything beyond the

thrown into the mix, as is a fairly tasty flame-thrower which if used properly, can leave your enemies charred beyond recognition. Underwater slaughter is now also possible, with the addition of a nifty spear gun and the small matter of concussion torpedoes, which should make for all manner of aquatic tomfoolery. There's even the opportunity to straddle a triceratops armed with its very own 20mm cannon, which certainly isn't something you get to do every day.

As for levels, *Turok 2* revolves around six huge quests, spanning such cheery venues as The Death Marshes and The Underground Abyss. Each features a number of mission objectives, and the game is populated with more than 30 different enemies and five hideous bosses.

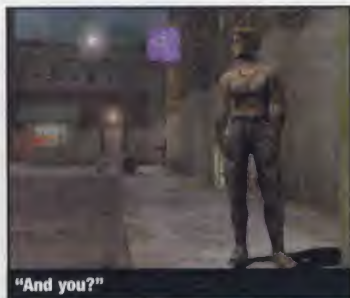
Hopefully *Turok 2* will be here in time for Chrimbo, so we'll soon be able to tell you whether it's *Jurassic Park* or *One Million Years BC*. **PCZ**



The elaborate architecture and lush locations have been maintained.



"What the feck are you lookin' at?"



"And you?"



The characters in *Kingpin* are extremely detailed and superbly animated.



The enhanced *Quake II* engine delivers atmospheric and effects-laden visuals.



Go in with guns blazing and you'll run into trouble. You have to interact with the numerous NPCs to progress and survive.

**FIRST
ENCOUNTER**

KINGPIN

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Xatrix
PUBLISHER InterPlay
WEBSITE www.xatrix.com
OUT Spring '99

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- It's from the people who brought us *Redneck Rampage* (PCZ #52, 84%) and the awesome *Quake II: The Reckoning* (PCZ #65, 84%) mission pack
- It uses a rather lush advanced version of the *Quake II* engine for superior speed and superbly atmospheric environments
- Tough-talking rap boys Cypress Hill are contributing to the soundtrack and dialogue
- Your best friend is a dog, and you can swear a lot

We first happened upon *Kingpin* a few months ago, tucked behind closed doors on Interplay's stand at ECTS. We were actually supposed to be looking at *Galleon*, which is being developed by ex-Tomb Raider chaps Paul Douglas and Toby Guard, but whenever Toby began to demonstrate the wonders of his new game engine,

Your best friend is a dog and everybody swears at you. Jeremy Wells looks at a new sim for virtual vagrants with attitude

our attention was distracted by a succession of loud expletives emitting from the speakers connected to a PC on the opposite side of the booth. Of course, once Toby had finished his demo and everyone had agreed that it did indeed look a bit 'spesh', the consensus was that we just had to find out who, or what, was responsible for such disgraceful behaviour.

We were greeted by a very pleasant chap from developers Xatrix, who informed us that the game we were listening to, and now looking at, was *Kingpin*, a gritty *Quake*-meets-Martin-Scorsese-style romp set in a fictional retro-tech urban world of violence and crime, populated by whores, gangs and drug addicts. Our interest noticeably pricked, we set about interrogating him further as to the game's credentials.

A few minutes later and we were gagging for playable code. Far from being just another *Quake*-clone, *Kingpin* enables you to explore numerous storylines and sub-plots, interact with numerous NPCs, team up with them, torture them and, of course, shoot them dead. Having spent the last couple of weeks playing

"Far from being an out-and-out blast-fest, if you're too cheeky too soon expect to get your head blown off, which means cunning, stealth and a silver tongue are as useful as an itchy trigger finger"

the excellent *Half-Life* (reviewed on page 88), we were more than ready for our next dose of totally immersive, movie-style, gun-toting shenanigans, and *Kingpin* looked like it might fit the bill perfectly.

Like *Half-Life*, *Kingpin* uses an enhanced version of ID's über-engine, and is full of rather neat graphical

effects, architecture and superbly animated characters who behave with varying degrees of hostility towards you. Far from being an out-and-out blast-fest, if you're too cheeky too soon you can expect to get your head blown off, which means cunning, stealth and a silver tongue are as useful as an itchy trigger finger and the ability to shoot people in the head from across the street.

We were highly impressed by what Xatrix have managed to accomplish. Like Confounding Factor's *Galleon*, *Kingpin* has immediately established itself at the top of PC ZONE's Most Wanted for '99 list. We'll be keeping a very close eye on its progress over the next couple of months. **PCZ**

You're not alone in *Kingpin*. Nope, you've got a fanged, four-legged friend who helps protect you.





Question the locals in the town square.



A forest, clearly. (Thanks - Ed).



You want underwater levels? Here's one they made earlier.



Go to hell - literally.



Up to four people can play with each other (if you know what we mean).

QUEST FOR GLORY 5: DRAGON FIRE

FIRST ENCOUNTER

It's an RPG. With adventure elements. It's Chris Anderson. With the low-down. And stuff

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Cendant
PUBLISHER Cendant
WEBSITE www.sierra.com
OUT December '98

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ Established pedigree
- ★ Intuitive interface
- ★ Three ways to play

The *Quest For Glory* series reached its peak at a time when point-and-click adventures were the talk of the town and RPGs were curiously still in vogue. *Quest For Glory* cashed in on this fact by offering a subtle blend of both elements, making for a well-rounded and compelling gaming experience.

The fifth episode in the series is almost here, but things have moved on since the earlier titles were released, and the developers of *Dragon Fire* will quickly discover that the rules have changed. The point-and-clicker is all but extinct, with the new breed of adventures turning to 3D and freedom of exploration in their bid to regain their popularity of old (Cendant's own *Gabriel Knight 3* and *Mask Of Eternity* are notable examples). RPGs are evolving from statistic-based character improvement affairs into fully-blown arcade games. So where does all this leave *Quest For Glory 5: Dragon Fire*?

The game's developers have obviously thought long and hard about this and decided to stick to the formula that has served them so well in the past. To this end, the latest episode of *Quest For Glory* ignores the

current obsession with first-person games and reverts to the third-person action seen in previous games in the series. Once again you can choose to play a magician, a fighter or a thief, all of whom have individual skills and offer different advantages (and, of course, disadvantages) depending which character group they come

“The intuitive interface and simplistic approach to the adventure genre will prove to be a breath of fresh air”


from. There are also many different ways to solve the puzzles depending on which character you're playing.

The RPG element kicks into play as characters become better at fighting and spell-casting over time and as

they gain experience. If the RPG element works in the same way as in the earlier titles in the series, you can expect it to play a minor part in the great scheme of things, as opposed to the more usual full-on stats-fest seen in games like *Lands Of Lore 2* (PCZ #56, 92%) and *Dungeon Master 2* (PCZ #30, 59%).

Adventure fans, however, will be on more familiar territory, as *Dragon Fire* will contain puzzles and game elements similar to those in many of the early Sierra adventure games, hence inspiring a sort of mini-revival of the point-and-click adventure.

We are cautiously optimistic that *Dragon Fire*'s intuitive interface and simplistic approach to the adventure genre will prove to be a breath of fresh air to gamers who are tired of fumbling their way around 3D environments, constantly adjusting camera angles so they can see what the hell is going on. But, of course, we may be proved wrong.

So, a potential rival for *Tomb Raider* and co, or a nostalgic walk down the digital alleys of yesteryear? All will be revealed in our review in next month's *PC ZONE* (on sale Tuesday 15 December. )

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- EDDI - the integrated online helper



FUNSOFT.



SYNETIC
The Factory



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Thirty missions and an enveloping storyline with its origins in the movie give T62 a distinctly different feel.



The easy-to-fly flight model means you're free to concentrate on racking up your kills, rather than keeping your F/A-18 airborne.



A quick-start option means you're in among the action within seconds.



The game offers intense action and the chance to park your plane in some really stupid places.



T62's user-friendly design means you'll be scraping bogies off your tail in no time. Or something.

FIRST ENCOUNTER

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Zipper Interactive
PUBLISHER MicroProse
WEBSITE www.microprose.com
OUT November '98

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- The original game proved to be both accessible and fun
- There are over 30 missions to complete, set in Libya, Siberia and Columbia, and a developing storyline
- 3D-accelerated graphics to die for, and eight-way multiplayer support

“Even if you’ve never played a flight sim before, you won’t have to wade through 200 pages of a manual to have yourself some fun”

JIM BOSLER, ZIPPER INTERACTIVE

TOP GUN 2: HORNET'S NEST

MicroProse are putting the finishing touches to the sequel to a game that was released almost three years ago, about a film that is now over ten years old.

Jeremy Wells goes in search of an explanation

If you're prone to worrying about nothing, you may be more than a little surprised to discover that MicroProse are about to release a flight sim that, on the face of it, will be competing against their own hotly anticipated *Falcon 4.0* for space on the nation's hard drives. Then again, you might not, preferring to dwell on why dropped toast always lands butter-side down. At the risk of the more sensitive of you not being able to sleep at night, we put the question to *Top Gun 2*'s developers and demanded an explanation.

“Our goal in developing *Top Gun: Hornet's Nest* is to provide the player with incredibly intense action and realism, while offering a user-friendly design,” says Zipper Interactive's Jim

Bosler. “We want players to jump right into the heat of battle from the start, and immediately be able to start taking out the enemy. Even if you've never played a flight sim before, you won't have to wade through 200 pages of a manual and struggle with an unforgiving flight model to have yourself some fun in this flight sim.”

Top Gun 2 is, in fact, a very different game from *Falcon 4.0*. Whereas the latter has been designed to appeal to heavyweight flight sim addicts – the kind of people who actually enjoy reading 500-page manuals and own a set of rudder pedals and a throttle controller – the sequel to *Top Gun: Fire At Will* (PCZ #37, 92%), like its predecessor, promises to appeal to those people who want the same quality in terms of

graphics and realism, but don't want to have to learn how to fly an F/A-18.

A quick gander at some pre-release code confirms that Mr Bosler is not prone to bullshitting hapless, know-it-all hacks. *Top Gun 2* appears to be both easy on the eye and not terribly difficult to fly. In fact, after just a few minutes the kill count is an impressive four to two, with both Allied casualties being self-inflicted. A developing storyline stretching over 30 missions, eight-way multi-player support, numerous ‘sexy’ cut-scenes and pre-mission briefings from the movie's Commander Hondo (remember him?) might just be enough to tempt those previously shy of flight sims to give it a whirl. Rest assured, we'll find out next issue (on sale Tuesday 15 December). **PCZ**

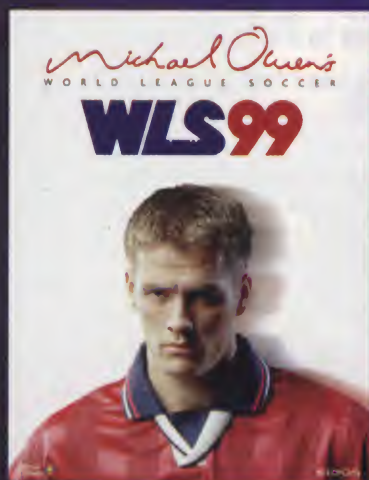
"WLS is back with Michael Owen
providing valuable fire power up front."

Ultimate PC – Dec 98

"Superb-looking playable football action,
based on the splendid WLS '98 engine."

PC Gaming World – Oct 98

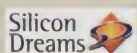
World class



SS...



...oh, and Michael Owen.



Michael Owen's World League Soccer '99 © and Published by Eidos Interactive Limited 1998. All Rights Reserved. Developed by Silicon Dreams.
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OBSESSED

WITH

LEVEL DESIGN

Driving about in a fast car; shooting the breeze Stateside; working on one of the greatest games ever produced. Not bad for a **ZONE** reader formerly from Reading

• WORDS Adam Phillips

PHOTOS: Paulette Petersen

CASE HISTORY



#7 THE LEVEL DESIGNER

NAME Dario Casali

AGE 24

LOCATION Five miles east of Seattle, Washington, USA

OCCUPATION Game designer

OBSESSION Map-making for 3D shooters

CONDITION BEGAN Came across a *Doom* map editor on a certain magazine's cover disk in September '93

HISTORY OF CONDITION Subsequently discovered multiplayer mapping and, with his brother Milo, started creating dozens of the damn things. Was eventually spotted by iD Software, which ultimately lead to a US-based job at Valve Software, creators of *Half-Life*.

OUTLOOK With a gorgeous girlfriend, a pad in the States and a nice motor, this is one obsession that no one, certainly not Dario, would ever want corrective treatment for

“Working with professional developers who share my enthusiasm for making great games is a dream come true”

DARIO CASALI
GAME DESIGNER AND OBSESSIVE
MAP MAKER FOR 3D SHOOTERS

We all know someone like it, and we do have a habit of taking the piss out of them, perhaps having a quiet chuckle at

their expense over a pint or three in the pub, knowing that they're back in their bedrooms toiling over a sweaty keyboard, downloading programmes and designing god knows what. With a smug sneer, we're pretty sure that whenever they say: "I'm hard at it. Can't make it tonight," it's just geek-speak for beating off to the latest set of faked Gillian Anderson pics online.

But people who spend hideous amounts of time on their computer, using it for something a little more cerebral than merely shooting a pedestrian in the face, usually have the last laugh. They're the ones who end up earning 500 quid a day contracting for some obscure but mucho successful computer company; jetting off to the Maldives (with a Net-connected laptop, mind you) for a two-week break, or landing themselves a peachy job on another continent. Drive down a random street in Silicon Valley, for instance, and you've never witnessed such a high nerd-to-Porsche ratio in your life.

To describe Dario Casali as a nerd would be unfair though. First off, like most tech-literate people he ain't really a nerd - he's actually bloody creative at what he does. Oh, and he drives a Golf VR6 instead of a Porsche 911. His penchant for spending obscene amounts of time at the keyboard began while at university. The reason? Same as the rest of the games-playing world - *Doom*.

"I had played *Wolfenstein 3D* and was hooked on that, so when I saw *Doom* I was totally awestruck," remembers Dario.

"I first saw it on a 486DX33 and couldn't believe how smoothly it ran. I remember



being genuinely haunted by it – the sounds were phenomenal and the monsters were scary. It was like nothing I'd seen before."

His move from merely playing *Doom* to spending hours designing

MAPS OUT FOR THE LADS

As is the norm, the Net is unrivalled when it comes to dishing out resources dedicated to map making and info on all aspects of the 3D phenomena triggered off by the legendary *Doom*. If you want to know more about map building or have a question in need of a good seeing to, check out the following

WEBSITES

DESCENT 1 & 2 www.planetdescent.com/

JEDI KNIGHT www.jediknight.net/

QUAKE 1 & 2 www.planetquake.com/

HEXEN 1 & 2 www.hexenworld.com/

UNREAL www.planetunreal.com/

HALF-LIFE www.half-life.org/

And for all your 3D shooter mapping news, check out

BLUE'S NEWS www.bluesnews.com/



Blue's News: a comprehensive site for bods from all walks of 3D shooter life. Updated daily.

FTP SITES

Also be sure to peruse the following FTP site which has maps by the shedload:

★ <ftp://ftp.cdrom.com/pub/>

NEWSGROUPS

And don't forget the all-important newsgroups – swap advice and pornographic pictures with like-minded folk:

★ QUAKE 1 & II

rec.games.computer.quake.editing
rec.games.computer.quake.playing
alt.games.computer.quake
alt.games.computer.quake2
rec.games.computer.quake.announce
rec.games.computer.quake.quake-c

★ UNREAL

alt.games.unreal

★ DOOM 1 & II

rec.games.computer.doom.announce
alt.games.doom
alt.games.doom.ii
rec.games.computer.doom.editing
rec.games.computer.doom.help

★ JEDI KNIGHT

alt.games.jedi-knight

for it was triggered by an unexpected source: *PC ZONE*, actually. "Around September 1993, *PC ZONE* featured Raphael Quinet's *Doom Editing Utilities* on the cover disk," explains Dario, "and I spent the whole night and the next day on the computer, just moving barrels and monsters about. I built my first box room map a week later, and this box sprouted corridors and more boxes – into which I stuffed as many monsters as possible."

Dario's interest began to wane though, until a friend told him that you could hook two computers together and fight against another person; an idea which instantly reignited Dario's interest. "I was dumbfounded," he offers, "and quickly shuffled my brother Milo's computer next to mine so that we could connect the serial ports together. We were playing on low detail with tiny, shrunken down screens, at one frame per second, but we were having so much fun that we played through the night."

The brothers Casali were hooked from then on, both building *Doom* deathmatch levels. In fact, the situation became so intense that it created a rivalry between the two of them, with each trying to outdo the other, and ended up creating two maps per week.

They also began holding four-player deathmatches with their mates at the weekend to litmus test people's reactions to their maps. "We got very positive feedback," Dario explains, "and the number of people who gathered steadily grew."

In the meantime, as part of his

university course he'd started working at ICL in Reading, where "my immediate boss was fired early on and I was basically left with a very light workload. I used the spare time I had to build levels for *Doom*." With a free Internet connection on his work PC, Dario regularly posted his and his brother's *Doom* levels for the rest of the world to play. Again, their work received rave reviews from Net pundits. Unknown to them at the time, this burgeoning popularity online would eventually lead to the brothers' big break.

"The atmosphere at Valve is more than anyone could ask for. Everyone's united in their desire to make *Half-Life* the best game they can, and this team spirit accounts for the ungodly hours we've put in to it"

DARIO CASALI

As Dario's time at ICL drew to a close, the brothers decided to create an eight-level single-player episode as a special thanks for all the support they'd received from the online community.

Soon after the episode's release, they struck gold. Dario and Milo were contacted by the company responsible for the classic game – the mighty iD Software itself. The top bods at iD – including John Romero – loved the eight-level episode and wanted to hire

the brothers for a project. "We were commissioned to build a full 32-level game," recalls Dario, "and we had under three months to get it done."

Out went revising for university exams, and in rolled a long winter spent designing *Doom* levels, creating what would ultimately turn out to be *Final Doom*. Paid a flat rate for each level, Dario did what any sane and sensible person should do in his position – blow the money on a high-powered motor.

Despite such rewards for his hard work, Dario's budding professional design career went through a self-inflicted hiatus: "Once *Final Doom* was out the door, I decided I'd had enough of level design, since making 32 levels in three months proved exhausting for two people."

Eight months passed before something else came along that proved enticing enough to set him off again – this time in the shape of *Quake*'s true 3D engine. The obsession was back: "I could do so much more than I was used to, and suddenly I was back into designing and devising plans for a *Quake* game, and creating concept art."

But he needn't have bothered. Before he'd finished even a single level, Dario was flown to Seattle and interviewed by *Half-Life*'s creators, Valve Software, for a position as a game designer, and accepted the job on the spot.

Since touching down in the States early last year, he hasn't looked back. "When I first saw the new technology that I'd be working with," Dario gushes, "I was itching to start building with it. Working with professional



While Dario has been banging out *Half-Life*, his brother Milo hasn't been slacking either, and is currently working on *Team Fortress II*, a 3D shooter using the *Half-Life* engine.

SO WHAT DO I BLEEDINGWELL NEED?

Has Dario's success tickled your ambition? Wanna have go yourself? Well stop thinking about it and start doing it.

Recommended map editors include:

DOOM - *Doom Editing For Total Headcases (DETH)*. Available from www.stormtroopers.com/drsleep/. Also, if you want to see the software that was featured on that fateful *PC ZONE* cover disk back in '93, then point your browser at www.montefiore.ulg.ac.be/~quinet/games/DEU/DEU-en.html.

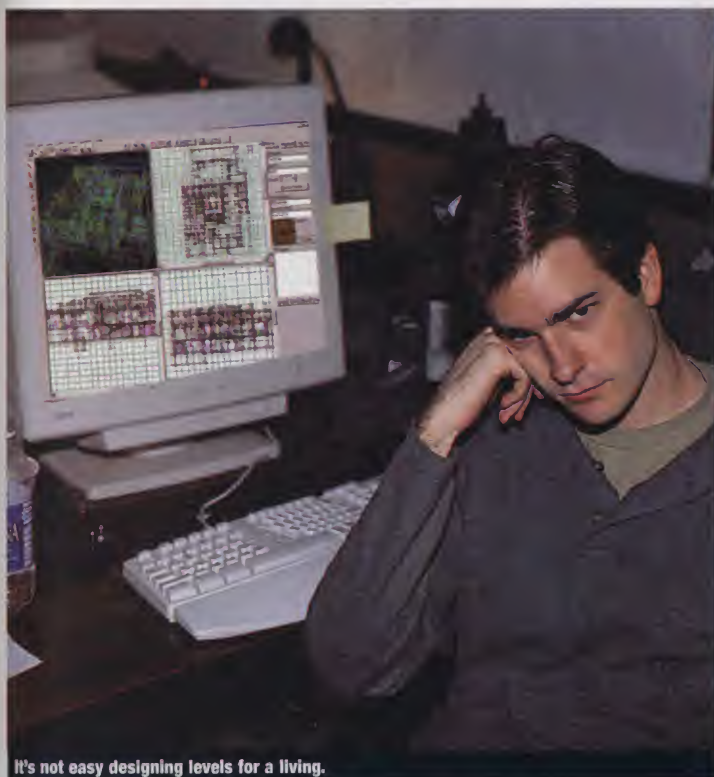
QUAKE 1 & II/HALF-LIFE - *Worldcraft 1.6a* supports both *Quakes* and will work with *Half-Life* when it splashes down - not surprising considering that the bods behind *Half-Life* created *Worldcraft* as well. Older versions available from www.softseek.com; latest version requires the handing over of cash and can be bought at www.worldcraft.com.

Once you've got a particular package sussied, Dario reckons that it should take you about a week to make a *Doom* level, two weeks for a *Quake* level, and a month to create a decent *Half-Life* level. Hmmm, the latter's title seems strangely appropriate.

• For a specific tutorial on how to create your own *Quake* levels, order PCZ #65 and PCZ #66 for our two-part step-by-step guide to creating that mapping masterpiece. (For back issues, tel 01789 490215.)



Some of the top sites, such as Planet Quake and Planet Unreal, boast large libraries of maps designed by players. They also feature 'levels of the week' and 'pictures of the day' that really show off the diversity of the add-ons available to anyone with a copy of the required game, a map editor and a Net connection.



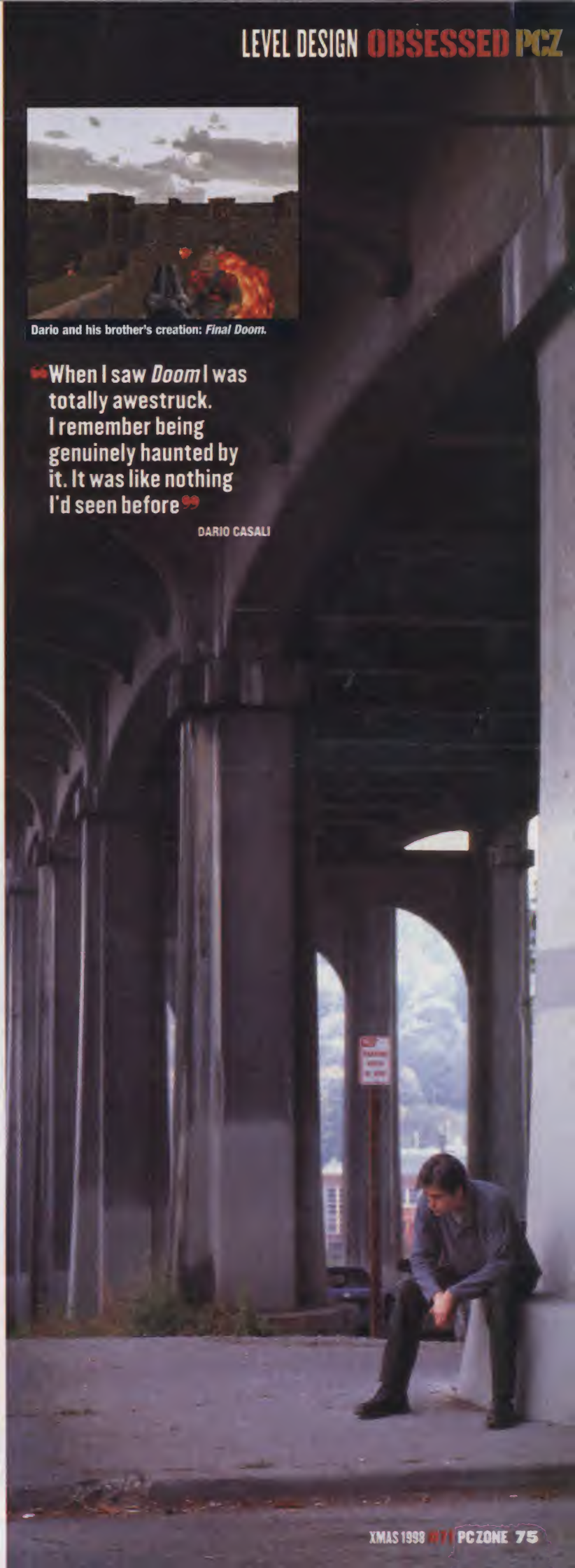
It's not easy designing levels for a living.



Dario and his brother's creation: *Final Doom*.

“When I saw *Doom* I was totally awestruck. I remember being genuinely haunted by it. It was like nothing I'd seen before”

DARIO CASALI



Enough to inspire:
the streets of
downtown Seattle.



“Anyone who believes in their ability, and can express that to the right people, will have a strong chance to do what they love as a career”

DARIO CASALI



This is Dario's Jeep.



This is where Dario works.

← developers who share my enthusiasm for making great games is a dream come true. The atmosphere at Valve is more than anyone could ask for. Everyone's united in their desire to make *Half-Life* the best game they can, and this team spirit accounts for the ungodly hours we've put in to it.”

And judging from our review (see page 88), it appears that all those ungodly hours have indeed paid off, and Dario has now carved himself an enviable reputation within the 3D shooter community. So what advice would he offer a budding mapping maestro currently sitting in their bedroom dreaming of creating The Next Big Thing? “There are a lot of

people in that position,” he offers, “so you need to be able to stand out in some way. If you've got what it takes, you need to sell yourself hard. Anyone who believes in their ability, and can express that to the right people, will have a strong chance to do what they love as a career.”

Sound advice, and something to be remembered when your mates are down the pub, gently taking the piss while you sit crouched in front of that monitor. After all, in two years' time you could be sitting on a sun-kissed white beach in the Maldives while they're supping pints while huddled around a gurgling radiator down the The Friendly Ferret. [E]

HERE'S ONE I MADE EARLIER

Dario offers a few dos and don'ts to novice map makers

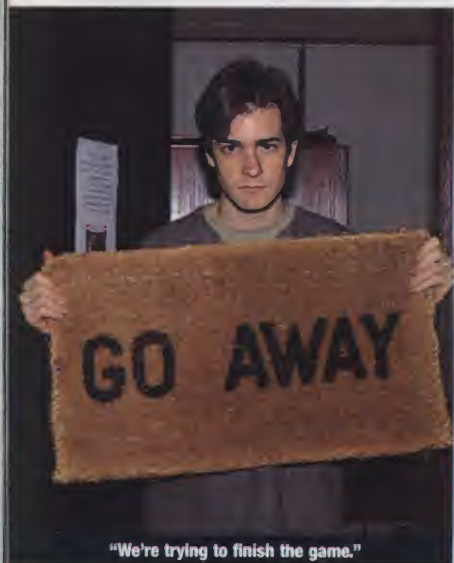
A lot of the maps clogging up the Net are about as appealing as the thought of spending a night of passion with Nora Batty. Many of them suffer from mundane design and dreary layout, and display a level of imagination usually found lurking inside a small lump of cheese. For wannabe designers out there, Dario offers the following advice to ensure instant popularity when you unleash that first mapping effort to the cynical and discerning gaming community:

DO...

- Use sound a lot. Without sounds, a level can feel dead.
- Work on the flow of the level so that players don't get lost.
- Be original! Come up with something people probably haven't seen – or even thought of – before.
- Invest a lot of time thinking about the whole level before you start building it.
- Look at other people's work so you know what can be done.

DON'T...

- Recycle old ideas – in terms of both the look and function of your map.
- Personalise too much – for example, by adding references to your favourite TV shows in your maps, or signing your name in the map somewhere.
- Release the map without playtesting it first.
- Overlook gameplay. It's more important to have a fun level than a level that just looks good.
- Ignore negative reactions – they usually tell you more about your map than positive ones.



“We're trying to finish the game.”



The latest *Doom Editing Utilities*, the package that triggered Dario's obsession.



Worldcraft is a top map editor but you have to pay for the latest version.



Download *Prodigy SE* for Quake at www.casali.demon.co.uk

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PC Home
91%

"Bigger, badder and
better than the
original in
all respects".

Ultimate PC
92%



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PC ZONE REVIEWS

Don't spend a single penny until you've checked out the **ZONE** reviews first

WHERE TO CALL

Having trouble finding any of the games listed in the reviews section of the magazine? Here are the numbers you need to call

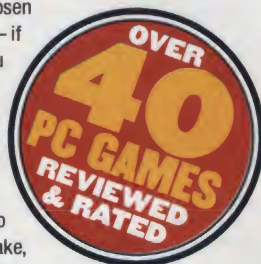
Activision 01895 456 7000
 Blue Byte 01604 232200
 BMG Interactive 0171 973 0011
 Core Design 01332 297797
 Cryo 01926 315559
 Crystal Dynamics/Ubisoft 0181 944 9000
 Eidos Interactive 0181 636 3000
 Electronic Arts 01753 549442
 Empire Interactive 0181 343 7337
 Funsoft 01322 292513
 Gremlin Interactive 0114 273 8601
 GT Interactive 0171 258 3791
 Infogrames 0161 827 8000
 Interactive Magic 01344 409399
 LiveMedia 01865 247714
 MicroProse 01454 893893
 Microsoft 0345 002000
 Mindscape 01444 246333
 NovaLogic 0171 405 1777
 Ocean 0161 832 6633
 Sierra 0118 920 9100
 Sold Out 0171 721 8767
 Take 2 Interactive 01753 854444
 Telstar 01932 22232
 Virgin 0171 368 2255
 ZBLAC 01626 332233

THE HALL OF SHAME

These are the games that we still haven't been sent for review. This means they're either completely crap and the publishers are scared we'll pan them, or their PR machine isn't quite up to full speed. The *Klingon* demo isn't up for review, but gets a special mention cos the bastards haven't sent it. Where is it, eh? Eh?
KLINGON: HONOUR GUARD
 DEMO MicroProse
STREETS OF SIMCITY Maxis/EA
BUST-A-MOVE 2 Acclaim
UBIK Cryo

REVIEWS YOU CAN TRUST

We at **ZONE** pride ourselves on telling you exactly what we think. Our writers are the most experienced and talented reviewers in the business. They're all experts in their chosen genre and they won't pull any punches – if a game's not worth buying, we'll tell you why. But we don't leave it there. We also want to know what you think of the games that come out, which is why we've got our Feedback section on page 141. This is where you get the opportunity to get your point of view into **PC ZONE**. If you've got a comment to make, then we want to hear it.



DON'T BELIEVE THE JARGON

The standard spec machine these days is a P166 with 32Mb of memory – but before buying any game you need to make sure it will work on your system. Because the technical specs on packaging can sometimes be a little optimistic to say the least, make sure you check out the 'We say' bit in our tech specs box at the start of reviews. This is where we report on what we think the minimum tech specs should be. If a game runs like a tortoise on the machine listed by the publishers, then we'll tell you. All the games reviewed are tested on the minimum-spec PC as quoted on the packaging.

WHAT DO OUR SCORES MEAN?

PCZONE 90-100% CLASSIC Here at **ZONE** we score every game out of 100. If a game receives a score of 90 or above, it is awarded the **PC ZONE** Classic award. These games are original, innovative, compelling and are worth buying even if you're not a fan of the genre.

PCZONE 80-89% RECOMMENDED If a game scores 80-89% it's awarded a **PC ZONE** Recommended award. Games that fall into this category are excellent examples of their type, and if you're a fan of the genre they're well worth buying.

70-79% Games that score in this region don't win any awards, but they're above average and well worth a look. If you're not a fan of the genre though, they will probably offer limited long-term appeal.

20-69% These games are below average and you should really only consider parting with your cash if you're a big fan of the series or genre or you see it at a reduced price.

PCZONE 0-19% PANTS Games that score under 20% should be avoided. They offer little in the way of long-term appeal, can be frustrating, and definitely aren't much fun. If a game is seriously bugged then it will also fall into this category. You have been warned.



82 WARGASM



88 HALF-LIFE



99 MADDEN NFL 99



105 KING'S QUEST VIII: MASK OF ETERNITY



113 GRIM FANDANGO



118 MICROSOFT COMBAT FLIGHT SIM

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Eee, it's just like CNN, innit?

With a title that stupid, the game had better be something remarkable. It is. Prowling through the minefields: **Charlie Brooker**

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 32Mb RAM **WE SAY** A P233 or above, all the RAM and HD space you can muster, a 3D card and a pair of gut-pummelling speakers. Oh, and some cake

PCZONE CLASSIC

ALSO CONSIDER

M1 TANK PLATOON II (MicroProse, £34.99) "The best modern-day war sim ever, full stop," we reckoned back in issue 63. Not as arcade-simple as *WarGasm*, but still a classic nonetheless. **PCZ #63, 90%**

TOTAL ANNIHILATION (GT Interactive, £12.99) The RTS that shoved *C&C* off its throne. You don't get as "involved" with the units as much as *Wargasm*, but it's fantastic at what it does. **PCZ #56, 92%**

Occasional forays into emotional puppeteering aside, *Saving Private Ryan* was a great movie. And an unusual one: a Hollywood epic prepared to spend three gut-wrenching hours reiterating the message that war is the single most obscene thing in the world... ever!

Unless you're a callous, sneering husk of a being, you can't *help* to have been moved by the plight of these men, these regular Joes, struggling with an amoral landscape of surreal and nauseating violence. You caught a glimpse of the gnawing terror that accompanied each second in the firing line. You witnessed the stealth with which death savages its victims. The sickening wonder of men's bodies churned to offal

before your sauced eyes left you dizzy, sent you reeling. And as the closing credits began their scroll, you shambled from your seat somehow *changed*, humbled by the thankless sacrifice of a generation, freshly aghast at the very *notion* of violence. Well, we did anyway.

Then along comes bloody *Wargasm*, and suddenly the spectacle of war has us dribbling like excitable toddlers. We're zooming across the countryside in an assault helicopter, strafing battlefields with a smile. We're crouched beneath a tree in some bedrizzled hilltop grove, tossing grenades at a passing convoy, chortling inwardly each time a truck goes up in flames. Or we're rattling around in a Chieftain tank pursuing a blameless grunt across acres of scorched dune before running him down, guffawing like donkeys when hot red blood splashes upward from the base of the screen, as if someone dropped a rock in a wine vat somewhere below our field of vision. *Wargasm* stands accused of transforming committed pacifists into

“It does for military simulators what *Command & Conquer* did for wargames: makes them accessible, fast and fun”



WHAT'S A LITTLE WAR BETWEEN FRIENDS?

You don't have to go a-warmongering completely on your lonesome. Not if you've got mates. With their own PCs. And modems. And heads

The multiplayer mode is great. You and your friends (up to 16 of yers) slug it out on a preset landscape, using up units one at a time. It's hilarious. During one of our network sessions a particular highlight was the moment when your correspondent, playing as a foot soldier, espied from afar two opposing forces, a tank

and a helicopter, having a little spat. I took aim with a grenade launcher and hit the chopper with an incredibly lucky shot, at which point it tumbled from the sky and landed smack bang on top of the tank. Two birds, one explosive stone, many gales of laughter. Our advice: link up at the earliest opportunity.



That's war, that is - as seen from the driver's perspective.



★ £39.99 • Infogrames • Out end November '98

WALKTHROUGH

SHAVING PRIVATE RYAN

A picture paints a thousand words. So here's 14,000 or so words about 55 seconds of sheer unadulterated *WarGasm*...



1 This is a Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC). The tough metallic shell protects the soft, potentially squishy soldier within from unwanted bullet wounds.



2 Having hopped out of the APC, we're suddenly struck by the familiarity of the landscape. Isn't this where they filmed all those *Road Runner* cartoons?



3 Time for a quick recce. My radar (bottom right) indicates two enemy tanks just ahead. Probably on the other side of that rock formation...



4 Sure enough, there they are. I'm too wee to show up on *their* radar, and if I stay behind them they probably won't spot me. Hmm...



The complete and utter downfall of society as we know it yesterday.



That'd make a nice painting. Although not for the relatives of the burning men, obviously.



Here's the map screen in action – no frills, just raw iconography.



I spy with my little eye... something to blow up. Ha ha.



Oi, you – get offr mol land!

HARD-CORE WARNOGRAPHY

Hey, everybody – make love, not war

That name. That bloody name. *Wargasm*. Sticks in the memory, granted, but *come on*. The art of love and the art of war are, and always should be, two entirely separate things. Granted, soldiers are *notoriously* sex mad.

But if *your* daily routine involved early morning runs on a diet of gruel, with occasional breaks for murder and bullet-dodging, *you'd* be fixated with basic physical pleasures too. Come sundown, the average barrack room resembles a covert pornographic chorus line, as rows of low-browed Essex boys thrash themselves senseless over a torch-lit copy of *Snatch Enthuslast*. Come the dawn, their blankets have the consistency of a Rice Krispie Square.

It's no better when they're out in the field. Liberate a town, and within minutes the entire battalion's regrouped in the local salon d'amour, lovelessly squirting its collective biological gravy over the velny chests of a roomful of toothless buck-a-go 50-year-olds.

Make no mistake, soldiers are simply *nutsy-cuckoo* about sexual intercourse. But they *never* get aroused during battle itself. That's for sickos. Or for people showing off their new 3D cards with a copy of *this* game. Just don't mix one with the other.

◀ bloodthirsty ogres prepared to rub their hands together and bathe in the debauchery of war. Verdict: guilty.

You see, this is just a bit *too* playable. It does for military simulators what *Command & Conquer* did for wargames: makes them accessible, fast and fun. Once word of mouth gets around, *Wargasm* will fly off the shelves. Christmas '98 is going to ring to the sound of gunfire and happy cash registers. And here's why.

REALITY BITES

If you're anything like us, you've often gasped at screenshots of the latest flight sim and marvelled at how photorealistic they look – the convincing terrain, the smoking missile trails, the detail, the lens flare... It's *begging* for a play. So you buy it. And then reality lurches up and elbows you in the throat.

The manual consists entirely of indecipherable jargon, and is sufficiently bulky to crush a small dog. There are a billion different keyboard commands to memorise, and to pilot your craft properly you're expected to buy a £500 joystick the length of a horse's penis, then sit with it jutting from between your thighs,

feverishly manipulating the matt-black shaft like some obscene future-sex cyborg. Once you're finally up in the virtual sky, it gets worse. White-knuckle dogfight fantasies are cruelly replaced with interminable exercises in trailing a pixel-sized bogey for 87 million miles until you loop the loop with sheer frustration and explode against the side of an

once you've cracked it, you're in).

There's a faintly apologetic storyline stringing the whole thing together, something about futuristic 'virtual wars' fought on a global military network, but that shouldn't concern you in the slightest. What *is* important is the level of immersion. You can *drown* in this sucker.

BEING THERE

Get this: you don't just control one 'thing', you're running your own little army, a la *Command & Conquer*. And as was the case in *C&C*, the start of each level finds you eyeballing a landscape from overhead, with just your assembled forces and a set of objectives for company. To command a unit to move or attack something, just point and click. So far, so familiar. Then the fun bit starts.

Double-click on any of your units and you're plunged into a real-time 3D viewpoint and the game becomes an arcade-style simulator. It doesn't matter what type of unit you choose – tanks, helicopters, armoured personnel carriers, foot soldiers – it all looks and feels intrinsically *real*. DID have years of simulation experience, and in *Wargasm* it pays off big-time. Everything,

“*Wargasm* combines the stunning visuals of a high-end sim with the instant playability of an arcade game”

unprepossessing hillock. Tank simulators aren't much better – just harder to crash.

Wargasm shovels all that bullshit right down a very large toilet. It combines the stunning visuals of a high-end sim with the instant playability of an arcade game. The single trickiest thing to learn is the concept of steering a turret in one direction while the body of your tank goes in another (it's a left brain/right brain thing –

WALKTHROUGH CONTINUE!



5 Tee hee. Let's plant a bomb behind them. Snigger. When it goes off, they'll die. Ha ha. In pain. Chortle. Their families will weep for months. Guffaw.



6 Having sown the seed of their destruction, I'll retire to a safe distance... then turn around for a good, long look. Ha ha ha ha ha. Ho ho...



7 Okay, detonator at the ready and it's 10... 9... 8... 7... 6... 5... 4... 3... 2...



8 That'll be 'one', then. Bet that hurts. Hot, twisted shards of metal tearing their bodies to gory shreds. Still, that's war. It's cruel.



9 Having moved back to survey the damage, I can just about spot two dark blobs somewhere down there in that valley. Best zoom in with the sniper view...



You can call in supply helicopters during battle – they come bearing useful power-ups.



Eee, it's just like CNN, innit?



A chopper lets rip with some nasty missiles.

TANKS

Just like 'the kids', they're wearing Caterpillars

Volvo owners like to think their cars are sturdy and protective, but if they bumped into one of these behemoths their car would crumple like an aluminium can. Built like a brick defecation parlour, fitted with 'go anywhere' caterpillar treads, tanks are the mechanical equivalent of a burly outdoorsman with a job to do.

Driving the tank is fun, although since the turret turns independently it's easy to get confused in the heat of the moment – although that's also part of the charm. An interesting experiment is to play with a friend on a single keyboard – one steering, the other aiming the turret.

Aside from tanks, you've also got APCs and anti-aircraft units to toy with. Like a madman.



CHOPPERS

Blue Thunder, Airwolf, Budgie...

The temptation to spew out some lame 'chopper' gags is great, but that would be about as funny as a fish hook in the eye, so instead we'll simply state facts. Helicopters represent the utmost in military yin and yang: absolutely devastating when delivering a salvo of air-to-ground missiles, pathetically exposed when targeted by units on the ground.

There's *nothing* as satisfying as wiping out a whirlybird, especially if you're playing as a grunt. But equally, little matches the warm glow you get from annihilating an entire squadron with a blanket of hi-tech whizzbangs.

Oh, and *do* watch the ground: smacking into the side of buildings or trees can still mess you up.



TROOPERS

Private Ryan? Who he?

For highly personal thrill-mongering, ground troops can't be beat. Foot soldiers are ideal for surprise assaults on enemy turf – they're adept at sneaking around unnoticed, planting bombs and sniping.

There *is* one major drawback, however: they're not exactly armour-plated, and are therefore exceptionally vulnerable. And not just to gunfire either; being squished by tanks is a further hazard.

Controlling a soldier feels a little odd at first – you can twist their upper torso in the same manner as a tank's turret, but sadly you can't use the mouse a la *Quake*. Once you've come to terms with that, however, there's nothing to quite match the joy of training an enemy helicopter in your sights, or the pant-staining terror of a mid-afternoon jog through a criss-cross barrage of heavy gunfire.



from the movement of the tank tracks to the scarlet glow of the desert sunset, is entirely convincing. The sheer amount of detail is astonishing. During a thunderstorm, for instance, you can hear the sound of rain rattling on a trooper's tin helmet, or switch viewpoints and watch water spattering on to the 'camera' itself. Dawn, misty mornings, bright afternoons, golden sundowns and icy twilights are also recreated for your viewing pleasure.

Not that you notice. You're too busy blowing the shinola out of everything, accompanied by the stirring Wagner soundtrack (note to developers: more classical music in games, please).

THE IDENTIFICATION GAME

Imagine you're playing, say, *Command & Conquer*, and you decide to send one little guy in to do a bit of reconnaissance before you plan your main assault. As you watch him scampering toward the enemy, all on his lonesome, you can't help rooting for him, as you would for any cinematic underdog.

So what? So this: in *WarGasm*, you can actually *be* that guy. You have to dodge the bullets,

clamber up the side of the mountain and peer at the enemy stronghold through your sniper sights. At which point you might decide to send in a trio of heavy-duty tanks to do some shelling. Well guess what: *you* get to roll on in there and do all the aiming and blasting too. Or, if you prefer, visit the map screen, order the tanks to attack, then let their AI take care of it while you commandeer your lone soldier and skulk in round the back entrance with a pocketful of hand grenades. Your call.

Once you've polished off one mission, it's on to the next. The levels are staged across the globe – complete a whole region (Europe, say, or South America), and your prize is a selection of nouveau technologies. And units. And weapons of mass destruction. And, therefore, fun.

BUT...

But before we go, a quick cold shower: the game isn't perfect. In fact, we've got *loads* of little niggles: why can't you use the mouse to turn your head or the turret? Why can't you swap from one unit to another without having to visit the map screen first? Why are the missions so 'samey'? Why aren't there more multiplayer

options, or wider variety in the 'instant action' arcade mode? Most importantly, why isn't the AI more trustworthy? Units sometimes do *very* stupid things amounting to self-destruction, leaving you so enraged you'll want to stand up and hurl shoes at the screen.

So *WarGasm* isn't faultless. Still, overall it rocks bells. It's a wildly ambitious game. And while it can't achieve everything it sets out to do, it accomplishes enough to warrant your attention and custom. DID deserve a warm rub-down for producing a delicate blend of action and strategy and, aside from anything else, doing it differently. Drop curtain. Cue applause. [C]

PCZ VERDICT

- UPPERS Excellent visuals • Total immersion • Arcade-style controls • Hilarious multiplayer game
- DOWNERS If *only* you could aim with the mouse • Map interface could be easier to use • If your PC isn't Captain Bignuts, forget it

93 Oh what a lovely war



00 I was right. That's an enemy tank alright... but he's miles away. Time to crack out the rocket launcher. Yuk yuk. Chuckle. Snort.



00 There goes my rocket, trailing in from the left-hand side of the screen. And it's a thing of beauty: smoke trails, lens flare, the works.



02 Ho ho ho! Check it out – men dying in pain! It's alright though, I can't see their charred, screaming carcasses from here. More's the pity. Tee hee!



03 Oh, shiskabob. His mate's just spotted me. And unless I'm very much mistaken, he's just fired a shell at me too.



04 Squint closely and you might just make out my charred body. I'm dead as Diana Dors. Boo. And, might I add, hoo.

END

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NOVALOGIC

HALF-LIFE

★ £39.99 • Sierra • Out now

It's here, it's great, it's sick, it's wrong.
Turning thoughts into words: Steve Hill

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** 3Dfx cards
WE SAY As usual, more is better. A lot more, in this case

PCZONE CLASSIC

Optimistic theorists predict that within the next ten years, games are going to 'kick Hollywood's butt', with interactive entertainment usurping the more passive – and more popular – medium of film.

It is posited that, sooner or later, a game will come along that does for the industry what *Star Wars* did for the movie business, achieving universal appeal and spawning the concept of the

blockbuster. *Half-Life* certainly isn't that game, but it is a step in the right direction, evoking emotions on a par with some of the best films, the tension supplemented by some deeply disturbing images. For once, the marketing skunks' soundbites about 'wholly immersive environments' ring true, and at times it is genuinely shout-out-loud terrifying. It is, in short, a good thing.

How have they gone and done that, then? For the last couple of years, the game has largely been shrouded in mystery. Developers Valve have been beaver away at their base in the woodlands of Washington (state, not Tyne &

Wear), deep in the heart of *X-Files* territory, and aspects of this have clearly filtered into the game. *Half-Life* is rife with conspiracy theory, and the aliens are only too real – not restricted to the archetypal little green men variety, but comprising grotesque monstrosities with a penchant for feasting on your vital organs and spitting you out as giblets. This is one game that certainly doesn't skimp on the gratuitous visuals, and some of the death sequences are above and beyond the call of sickness. It is far more than a straightforward splatterfest, though, and often relies more on the fear of the unknown than on mass butchery.

JACKANORY

As is becoming almost a prerequisite these days, the storyline is crucial. For years, the plot of a game was something slapped on the back of the box at the last minute, and a number of

old-school developers still maintain this practice. You can't get away with that sort of thing any more, though, and intricately scripted storylines are becoming more prevalent.

The storyline of *Half-Life* is as intricate as they come, although it

“The Quake engine has been stretched to its limit in *Half-Life*, and there's something for everyone”

begins in a fairly mundane fashion. You are Gordon Freeman, an employee of the Black Mesa Research Facility in New Mexico, and you're late for work. This becomes apparent in the compulsory real-time intro, as a monorail transports you through the labyrinthine chambers of the

ALSO CONSIDER

SIN (Activision, £39.99) The tweaked *Quake II* engine makes for plenty of variety in this often relentless action adventure.
PCZ #70, 91%

KLINGON: HONOUR GUARD (MicroProse, £39.99) *Star Trek: The Next Generation* allied with the *Unreal* engine adds up to an extremely sweaty game. No Ginsters required.
PCZ #68, 94%

UNREAL (GT Interactive, £39.99) Pretty colours and flashing lights in your head arguably disguise an eventually repetitive affair.
PCZ #65, 93%

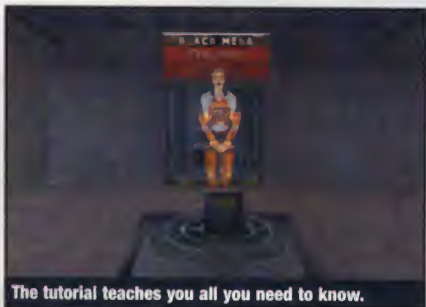
QUAKE II (Activision, £44.99) The single-player game looks decidedly ropy in light of the recent batch of plot-driven extravaganzas. Multiplayer still does the business, though.
PCZ #59, 97%

complex, the title sequence taking up at least a good five minutes of your life. It does give you the chance to come to terms with the scale of the place, though – something that becomes more evident as the game pans out.

As well as having a bad name (see Gordon Is A Moron panel, page 91), Gordon is having a bad day. Of course, this can happen to anyone, whatever soul-destroying, mind-crushing task you

DON'T READ THE SODDING MANUAL

Well aware that nobody likes reading manuals, Valve have included a superbly realised tutorial that painlessly teaches you everything you need to know about playing *Half-Life*. It takes the form of a hazard course, with instructions given by a holographic woman on how to use your envirosuit, the self-contained life support system that you occupy for the vast majority of the game. As well as explaining the communication system, the hazard courses teaches you the rudiments of running, jumping, ducking and so forth, and even include a shooting gallery to hone your skills. It's an excellent idea, and even a games virgin would come away with the basic skills required to have a stab at the game. Other developers take note.



The tutorial teaches you all you need to know.



This lumbering piece of shit takes a lot of killing.



Some sharp shooting takes a helicopter out of the sky.



I'm not even gonna bother lowering my standards to make a chopper joke here, so make up your own!



After hours of pissing about, you get to burn a huge tentacle beast to a cinder.



Merciless, wanton, cold-blooded murder. How we laughed.



It appears that landmines still pose a problem in the mixed-up world of *Half-Life*.



A hand-held baby alien. Throw it at someone and it attacks. Cool!



The most bizarre weapon of all is actually a living creature which, when thrown at your enemies, proceeds to bite chunks out of them.



Tampering with science is bound to lead to trouble.

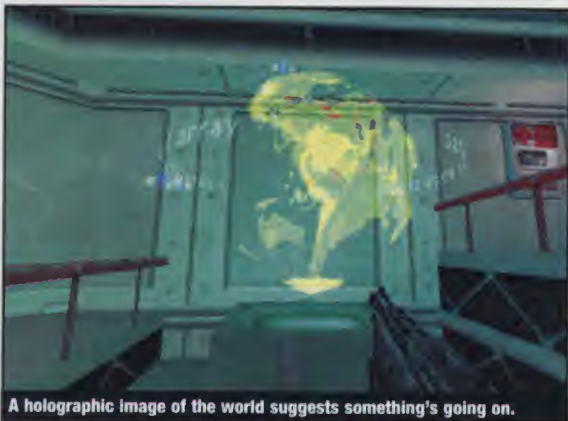
Chew it, soldier boy.



Another day at the office – PC ZONE on deadline.

This tentacle beast is blind but has acute hearing. Distract it with a lobbed grenade.

“It stays resident in the brain for some time, with rapid eye movement remaining a problem for hours after playing”



A holographic image of the world suggests something's going on.



Treat yourself – have a can of pop.

perform for desultory financial reward. You've all been there: you're late, the photocopier's playing up, that fax hasn't arrived, you've been ritually humiliated by your superiors and, to top it all, the pie shop's all out of steak and kidney. Small potatoes indeed in the world of Gordon Freeman, who turns up for a day at the office and within the hour is fending off alien beings with a crowbar while his colleagues are eaten alive in front of his eyes. We've all been in a World Of Shit (traditionally around deadline time), but this is in a different class. A very good reason to stay in bed, if ever one was needed.

TALK, TALK, TALK

The way *Half-Life* sucks you in is ingenious. To begin with, you are genuinely going about your business. You can saunter around the place, go for a piss, get yourself a can of pop and talk to your workmates. Yes, talk. *Half-Life* employs a character interaction system that elevates it beyond the glorified shooting galleries that make up much of the genre. Strolling up to someone and pressing the 'use' button prompts a series of responses such as "I'll stay here" or "Let's stick together", enabling you to manipulate your

colleagues to do your bidding. Scientists can open private areas, and when it all kicks off, security guards can help repel the alien hordes. Simple but effective, it's an ambitious idea, and the lip-synching is excellent – a far cry from the *Heidi*-standard efforts of yore. And as a – perhaps intentional – side effect, it is difficult not to feel a slight pang of concern when you see the walls painted with the blood of someone with whom you were recently chatting. Grim indeed.

It would be unfair to give away too much of the story, but suffice to say that when it goes off you had better be prepared to run, dodge, hide and bludgeon, often at the same time.

In keeping with the unassuming opening, you begin the game unarmed – not a situation that will stand you in particularly good stead. You're a scientist, not a fighter, but thankfully help is at hand. Once located, the default crowbar is a master stroke, enabling you to smash through windows and grates, as well as lash out wildly at all and sundry, particularly the despicable face huggers. The damage these parasites cause is clearly demonstrated as they take over the bodies of fellow scientists, forcing you to cleave

the skulls of your erstwhile workmates, accompanied by suitably gruesome sound effects. It's not all close combat skirmishing, though – looting the still warm corpse of a butchered security guard yields a rudimentary pistol.

ALIEN NATION

Different aliens cause different kinds of pain, including spitting a poisonous substance at you, and even creating a fatal sonic boom. Twisted. It's a scary business, and approaching beasts can often be

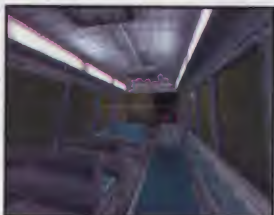
“Half-Life is a sensational game, with a massive amount of gameplay”

recognised by their individual sounds, which is more than enough to give you the haddabs. Those who prefer the stench of charred human flesh are also catered for: in one of the game's many twists, you end up doing battle against what seems to be the entire military, whose weapons you can then pilfer. This gives plenty of scope for more ultraviolence. For instance, tossing a grenade round a corner

WALKTHROUGH

TRAIN SPOTTING

In probably the most impressive intro yet seen, the game begins with Gordon Freeman's journey into work...



1 The very opening scene, on a train. No fun here.



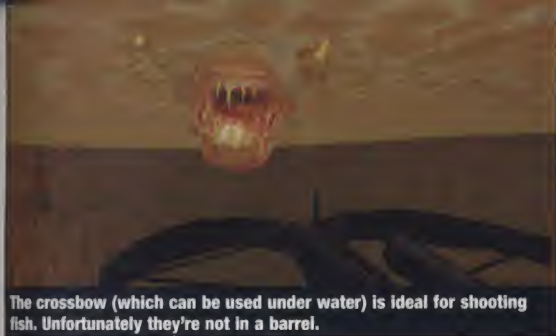
2 Heavy machinery doing some clever stuff.



3 Some kind of rocket. Interesting.



4 Jesus Christ! It's the ghost train at Blackpool!



The crossbow (which can be used under water) is ideal for shooting fish. Unfortunately they're not in a barrel.



Looks like it's too late for this security guard, despite the best efforts of the scientist.



Flashing red sectors show the direction of damage – in this case your face.

can often yield the remnants of a human head and a couple of stray limbs, flayed of skin and barely recognisable. For no apparent reason, this is hilarious. And just for fun, you can also shoot at your fellow scientists, forcing them to cower and whimper before you slay them at point-blank range. Again, this is hilarious, although grown men crowding around a monitor laughing maniacally at cold-blooded murder surely cannot be a healthy thing. Were you to witness a similar occurrence in 'real life', you would be scarred indefinitely, the images haunting your every waking hour, and years of intensive therapy would be required to come to terms with the horror. Funny old world.

TOOLED UP

Of course, a 3D shooter wouldn't be complete without a ludicrous array of unlikely weapons, and *Half-Life* doesn't disappoint, progressing through the perennial crowbar, a pistol, a very useful magnum, a shotgun and a machine-gun which doubles as a grenade launcher. Satchel bombs also come into play, as do laser mines, a laser gun and a tranquiliser crossbow that can be used under water, and also a

realistic rocket launcher that has to be steadied on your shoulder. The most bizarre weapon of all, though, is actually a living creature which, when thrown at your enemies, proceeds to bite chunks out of them. Another point to note about the weapons is that rather than floating around in mid-air, they generally have to be looted from bodies or discovered in boxes. Likewise, health boosts are administered at first aid centres or via injections from scientists, ably suspending the sense of disbelief.

Furthermore, the levels are largely seamless, melding into each other fluidly. Many of them require a lot of retracing of steps, and getting lost can be annoying, although at no point do you ever actually want to stop playing. This is a game that will steal hours of your life, but you press on regardless because not only is it immensely absorbing, but you actually want to know what's going to happen next in a plot that takes numerous unlikely turns. Something sinister is afoot, and the fleeting appearances of a mysterious besuited man add to the conundrum.

PSYCHO-THRILLER

Half-Life is a sensational game, with a massive variety of

gameplay. Some parts are in the mould of a psychological thriller, and if we want to get all Barry Norman about it there are clearly nods in the direction of the *Alien* films or even John Carpenter's *The Thing*. Other parts are simply all-out war, with tanks and helicopters raining down on you. There is also a good deal of lateral thinking involved, with a bit of *Crystal Maze*-style box-shifting thrown in for good measure.

The *Quake* engine has been stretched to its limit and *Half-Life* has something for everyone. It stays resident in the brain for some time, with rapid eye movement remaining a problem for a good couple of hours after playing, and sinister tentacles invading your consciousness. *Half-Life* is a virtual world of horror and pain and it toys with your mind. Pull yourself together – it's only a game. **PCZ**

PCZ VERDICT

UPPERS Genuinely frightening • Sick and twisted • Compulsive storyline
DOWNERS It's quite easy to get lost

95 A thing of grace and beauty

GORDON IS A MORON

Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, the lead character in *Half-Life* is called Gordon. For a bit of fun in the office, we've compiled a list of minor celebrities who share this unfortunate monicker. It's a riot!

GORDON BENNET

Of debatable origin, his name nevertheless became a surprise alternative to cursing.

GORDON BROWN

He may sound like a classic Stranglers song, but he's actually our glorious Chancellor.

GORDON BURNS

Not particularly busy at the moment, this fastidious, if somewhat sinister, gameshow host once ruled *The Krypton Factor* with a rod of iron (not literally, of course).

GORDON COLLINS

Brookside original who struggled to come to terms with both his sexuality and his bouffant hairstyle. Memorably ran over his Dad's dog, Lucky, while drunk.

GORDON GILTRAP

Obscure moustachioed folk singer/guitarist, latterly

name-checked by Merseyside's premier kitchen sink surrealists, Half Man Half Biscuit.

GORDON HONEYCOMBE

Original TVAM newsreader, notable mainly for his unassuming manner and lack of hair (and stupid name).

GORDON KAYE

Not even a rogue spelling could help the rotund 'Allo 'Allo star during the '87 storms, when a large tree invaded his car and made acquaintance with his forehead. Oof.

GORDON STRACHAN

Angry Scotsman currently at the helm of hapless Coventry City. Prone to bouts of gibberish.

GORDON...

(Cancelled due to lack of interest.)

ENI3



5 A helicopter launch pad. Hmm...



6 Other drones on their way to work.



7 The security guard lets you out.



8 He taps in a secret code.



9 Now get to work, you idle twat!

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TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** TCP/IP, IPX, modem and serial multiplayer **WE SAY** Our Dual Pentium II with 256Mb RAM and a doctorate from Harvard went at a snail's pace on maps with more than ten computer opponents; the P133 we tried it on just locked solid and refused to work at all

The original version of *Railroad Tycoon*, with its Teletext interface and unsightly graphics, was altogether pretty hideous. In fact it was so darn ugly that farmers used to leave it running in the middle of fields to scare off the pigeons and stop gypsies stealing their tractors. Most of the game's static images looked as though they'd been culled straight from *Mugsy* on the Spectrum (where jagged lines and Day-Glo colours were all part of the charm); other elements, such as mail cars and coal wagons, were so indistinct that they required a long squint at the screen before you could figure out which was which.

Nevertheless, the game still managed to pull in the sales. Why? Because appearance aside, it was unique, absorbing, and had the longevity of a Californian Redwood. And with the release of *Railroad Tycoon Deluxe* (PCZ #7, 72%), the whole concept won its developer, programming supremo Sid Meier, several major awards, including Game of the Year and Best Simulation at the prestigious European Computer Trade Show (commonly referred to as ECTS).

LOOKING GOOD

The key for any sequel was to create an entirely fresh graphics engine, yet keep the Class A addictive nature of the game intact. Pop Top Software, the team of developers who own the rights to the *Railroad Tycoon* name, have clearly done their utmost. The whole world is now rendered at 1024x768 in 16-bit colour by something called S3D, a new software engine capable of flinging 300,000 polygons around your monitor without having to stop for a rest.

But S3D extends to more than just scrumptious visuals. You can

rotate the map and zoom in close to get a better look at all the different choo-choos, watch boxes moving along conveyor belts in factories, and see the waves nodding up and down on the ocean. You can also zoom right out to an effective height of about 35 miles – enough to look down and see entire continents.

Expanding on the original game, *Railroad Tycoon II* now encompasses more than 200 years of rail travel between 1804 and 2020, features more than 60 historically accurate engines, and has more than 30 different types of cargo to shunt around. This means that not only can you spend a lot of time picking, browsing and comparing the different trains, but there is also so much more scope for a complex economic infrastructure.

For example, instead of just transporting apples and pears from orchards to the nearest city centre, supply a local fertiliser plant with chemicals from a chemical factory (you can even pay to use another player's existing rail network) and you're able to provide the orchard with bags of Grow More. Your production subsequently increases accordingly, and you can then move the produce to a cannery where it's processed into tinned fruit. If your system works, the orchard, cannery, fertiliser plant and chemical factory flourish and, should you decide to buy up the four sites, you can ladle their profits into your own bank account.

PLAYING WITH MONEY

As with most strategy management games, your objective in *Railroad Tycoon II* is to squash the competition and make lots of money. So the best routes to pursue are the most lucrative ones; there's no



Here's a big diesel pulling out of Chicago. Witty remarks on a postcard please.



Hire a manager to help run the company, and gain special bonuses.

Run your network to the Big Apple and collect all those fare-paying passengers.



ALSO CONSIDER

TRANSPORT TYCOON + EDITOR (MicroProse PowerPlus, £15.49)

More accessible and with more of the essential bells and whistles that *Railroad Tycoon II* sadly lacks. Only downside is multiplayer limited to modem/serial cable. **NOT REVIEWED**

SIM CITY 2000 (Electronic Arts, £29.99) Perhaps the definitive management game, with plenty to keep any PC strategist amused. Watch out for the upcoming *Sim City 3000*, which looks simply delectable.

PCZ #13, 92%

INDUSTRY GIANT (Interactive Magic, £34.99) Textbook real-time god sim that offers you more of what you already have.

PCZ #68, 53%

Edward Henry Harriman				
Cash:	\$44K			
Stocks:	\$960K			
Total:	\$1,004K			
Stock	Price	Shares Owned	Share Value	Actions
Eastern Zone	\$49	0	\$0	View
Columbus & Cincinnati	\$80	0	\$0	View
Corpus Christi Western	\$80	0	\$0	View
Jacksonville Eastern	\$96	10,000	\$960,000	View
Raleigh & Wilmington	\$87	0	\$0	View

The company overview shows you how you're doing compared to your rivals.

When building a station, you see a graphic representation of it and all its outbuildings.

Unlike the USA, most European rail systems use electrified tracks. Delightful, aren't they?

point shifting a dozen crates of coffee beans into town if instead you can move uranium to a nuclear power plant and then get paid again for pushing its waste products into a landfill site.

But there's more than one way to generate cash. *Railroad Tycoon II* encompasses its own financial arena, enabling you to dabble in everything from stocks, shares and bonds, to forming takeovers and mergers. Many of the 18 supplied scenarios set targets for your personal wealth, meaning you need to stay tuned to the company portfolio screens and invest your money wisely in order to progress. Screw up and your broker is straight on to you; make a killing and you're able to force rival firms out of the market.

SEE THE WORLD, MY BOY

Railroad Tycoon II encompasses much of the industrialised world, from Britain through to central Europe, the Mediterranean, China, Korea, Scandinavia, the United States and South America. To be honest, all that really happens here is that the place names change and the map borders change shape.

Disappointingly, industries are not related to real-life locations and are seemingly placed at random, which means it's possible to find a rubber farm in Boston, or a sugar plantation just to the west of Stockholm. In simpler terms, the maps aren't actually that relevant. Only mountains and hills are of any real concern, as they slow your

trains considerably. This is especially true in the early years, when you find yourself wheezing around the countryside in Stephenson's Rocket, unable to go anywhere that isn't as flat as a billiard table. As time moves on, so technological advancements become available, enabling faster,

"It's possible to find a rubber plantation in Boston, or a sugar plantation just to the west of Stockholm"

more reliable trains, and a far wider spread of industry.

QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS

The one nagging doubt about all this is its striking similarity – both in name and function – to Chris Sawyer's landmark *Transport Tycoon* (PCZ #21, 94%). If you ignore financial management and an abundance of cute graphics, pretty much every aspect of *Railroad Tycoon II* is a modern-day re-enactment of the 1994 classic. Crucially, *Transport Tycoon* still feels the more 'complete' game, adding road, air and water-based transport systems, as well as important aspects like the ability to raise/lower the land and build tunnels. In *Railroad Tycoon II*, you have to knot your tracks into demented loops around every

geographical obstacle you encounter, which is plain crazy and not the least bit true to life.

What's more, the old timer has other neat features like signals, disasters, collisions, level crossings and service depots. Graphically it lags behind, but it's still as engaging as it ever was, is now available on MicroProse's budget label, runs like a dream in Windows 98, and takes up less than 3Mb of your hard drive.

So if you think you might like this kind of game, try *Transport*

Tycoon. If you already have a copy sitting on your shelf, *Railroad Tycoon II* won't provide any new thrills – even if it did win Best Non-Combat Strategy Game at E3. Trust us. [E]

PCZ VERDICT

UPPERS Great graphics • Lots of multiplayer options • Up to 32 computer opponents • Plenty of maps and a map editor • Financial management

DOWNERS Old wine in a new bottle • Missing some vital 'real-life' features • Continental maps are way too large and sluggish

78 A fine game, but lacks originality and flair

From time to time, newspapers pop up to keep you abreast of economic developments.



TRAINS IN THE GAME

Here are six trains from the game. There are actually 60 in total, together with 40 different types of accompanying carriage



1829 STEPHENSON'S ROCKET
Acceleration Amputee sloth.
Reliability Hahahaha!
Looks crap, and is completely and utterly awful. Takes several game months to go up small inclines.



1945 4-4-4 T-1
Acceleration Not bad.
Reliability Poo.
Stupid name, stupid train. Quick off the mark, but costs a small fortune to keep running.



1968 FP45
Acceleration Fast-ish.
Reliability Reliable-ish.
Cheap to run, and with all the aesthetic appeal of a Methodist Church.



1993 DASH-9
Acceleration Okay.
Reliability Yup, that's okay too.
Worth it if you can stomach the price tag. Not the cheapest to run, but goes on and on without breaking down.



1993 AMD-103
Acceleration Nyaaaaaah.
Reliability Oh yes!
It may look grey and boring, but it goes like shit off a Teflon shovel and won't need a spanner near it ever.



1994 THALYS BULLET
Acceleration Hospitalising whiplash.
Reliability Not here, mate.
Goes from 0-60 faster than an Exoco missile, but is as reliable as an Austin Allegro.



1997 CLASS 232
Acceleration Nissan Skyline.
Reliability Nissan Almera.
Goes like stink and doesn't go wrong. If you can gather the dosh to buy and maintain it, go for this one.

surf's up



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MEGASTORES

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**YOU ARE
OMNIPOTENT.
NATURE IS
YOUR ULTIMATE
WEAPON.**

NEVER BEFORE HAS A
COMMANDER WIELDED SUCH POWER.
YOU HAVE THE POWER TO STRIKE
DOWN THE ENEMY WITH LIGHTNING,
TO CREATE A PLAGUE, EVEN TO
BRING THE DEAD BACK TO LIFE.
USE MAGIC TO COMMAND THE
FORCES OF NATURE. DIPLOMACY TO
LEAD YOUR ARMY OF MYTHOLOGICAL
BEASTS. AND STRATEGIC THINKING
TO DEFEAT YOUR FOES.
COMBINE THESE ELEMENTS AND
YOU WILL TRULY BECOME A
LEGEND IN BATTLE.

**MAGIC &
MAYHEM**

**PC
CD**





AIRBORNE STRIKE

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POOL SHARK

★ £29.99 • Gremlin Interactive • Out November

When it comes to advice on chalking your cue, who better to ask than Paul Mallinson? That's right, no one

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** Most 3D accelerator cards and sound cards **WE SAY** Looks awful in software, so a P166 with 32Mb RAM should ideally be used in conjunction with a 3D card

ALSO CONSIDER

VIRTUAL POOL 2 (Interplay, £34.99) Slick, fast and uncomplicated pool sim. Also has UK rules and a smart 3D engine.
PCZ #58, 90%

JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL (Virgin, £39.99) More than just a pool game, *Cueball* is a superlative compendium of pub games and pastimes from that master of the mouse swing, Archer Maclean.
PCZ #68, 88%

Pool sims are perfect for idling away the hours when there's nothing better to do. The appeal of such games may puzzle some – after all, what's to stop you heading off to the nearest boozer to play the game in real life? With balls and chalk and beer and crisps and everything? The thing is, and as most pasty-faced computer freaks will understand, there are certain individuals out there who can hurt you, and staying at home

extremely easy to get into, and is particularly suitable for beginners. It is only a game of pool, after all.

MAKE YOUR SHOT

Shot-making is simply a case of sighting up visually, using the mouse in conjunction with the row of icons at the bottom of the screen that enable you to alter how the cueball is struck, then stroking the mouse at the desired speed to make the shot.

The physics engine, which is oh so important in a game such as this, is excellent – hit a ball too hard and it leaps convincingly out of an open pocket, and so on. It's all pretty much the same as in all the other pool games, except that it has an unnecessary bank of icons plonked at the bottom of the screen to annoy you and get in the way.

ROUGH AROUND THE EDGES

Where *Pool Shark* stands out from its competitors, though, is in the graphics department – although unfortunately not in a particularly

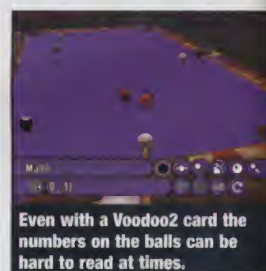
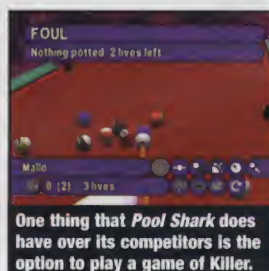
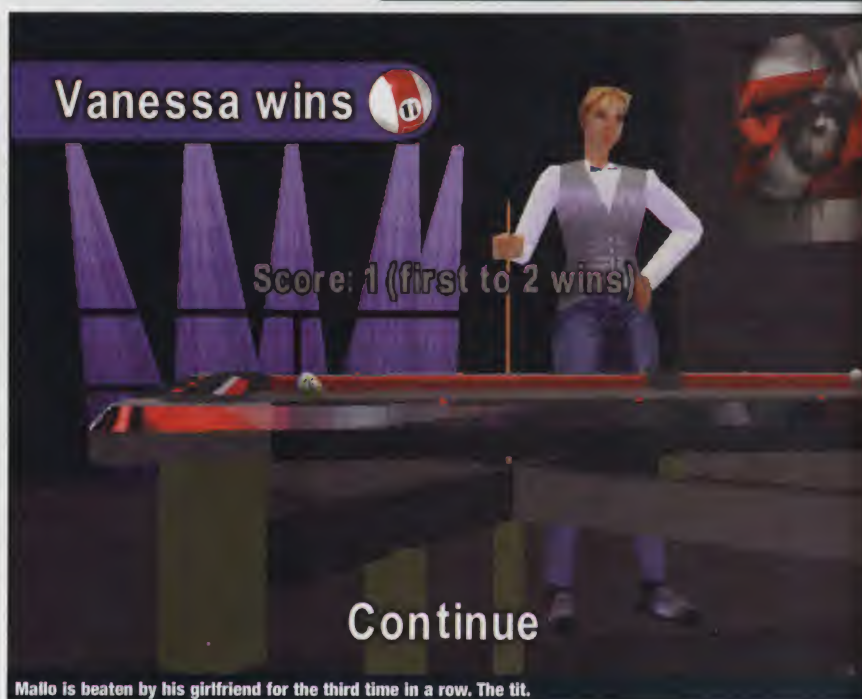
“There are individuals out there who can hurt you, and staying at home to play your favourite pub pastime can be safer”

to play your favourite pub pastime can be a far safer option. Many people may already be able to back me up here, seeing as *Virtual Pool 2* and *Jimmy White's 2* are already well-established as genre favourites.

So, Gremlin and *Pool Shark*. As with the aforementioned titles, this pool sim has pretty much everything your average pool fan could ask for: UK (and US) rules over a variety of match play options, a massively comprehensive tutorial, trick shots, open practice, an easy-to-use control system and some half-decent 3D graphics. *Pool Shark*, again like the above, is

good way. *Pool Shark's* graphics are surprisingly rough, although thankfully that doesn't interfere with the game too much. The tables are poorly textured, and some of the backgrounds look very dated. The blue and white icons overlaying the screen aren't much cop either. There are numerous computer-controlled characters that animate well – walking around the table, chalking their cues – but they're badly modelled in 3D and superfluous to the game itself. The floating cursor is also slow and annoying, and should have been removed along with the icons.

By the looks of that hand, it's Jeremy Beadle's turn.



THIRD-BEST BUY

Apply a bit of patience and effort, and these gripes become fairly redundant in light of *Pool Shark's* accessibility and solidity. It's not a bad game by any means. In fact it's fun, especially with two or more players. However, at the end of the day it loses out to *Virtual Pool 2's* quality and finesse and should be considered the third-best buy in the genre. **PCZ**

PCZ VERDICT

UPPERS Very pick-up-and-playable
• Large variety of options • UK rules galore

DOWNERS Looks as rough as a badger's arse • Floating cursor is annoying • Looks like a PlayStation port

70 Solid if unspectacular

ICON EXPLAIN

Those strange blue and white blobs at the bottom of the screen – what are they all about, then?

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Next ball | 5 Apply spin |
| 2 Rotate direction 45 degrees | 6 View score card |
| 3 Reposition cueball | 7 Overhead view |
| 4 Change cue elevation | 8 Zoom |
| | 9 Aim/adjust |



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NEVER BEFORE HAS A
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**ANTI-PERSONNEL
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One improvement over

"Right, you get his trousers down and I'll hold his legs."

MAGIC & MAYHEM

Embark on a journey through the most challenging real-time strategy game ever. A game where the mastery of magic is the key to your personal survival.

Having been transported to a time and place where magic and mayhem reign supreme, your mission is to return to reality.



"THIS IS JUST WHAT THE REAL TIME STRATEGY GENRE NEEDED – A BREATH OF FRESH AIR" – ULTIMATE PC 90%

There are three worlds, split into several territories, each controlled by ever-more powerful wizards who you must defeat.

You use magic to conjure up your troops – an army of zombies, centaurs and redcaps – and lead them into battle.



"HIGHLY POLISHED GAMEPLAY TOGETHER WITH HIGHLY POLISHED PRESENTATION – ONE FOR EVERYONE'S COLLECTION" – ULTIMATE PC



As you progress, you'll learn how to cast bigger and better spells.

Then volcanoes, tornadoes and lightning strikes will be at your command. You'll have the power to send a plague or meteor shower upon the enemy. The power even to raise the dead.

Combine magic with strategic thinking and diplomacy and you shall return to reality as a truly legendary leader.

"MAGIC & MAYHEM – THERE'S NO OTHER GAME LIKE IT" – PC ZONE

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**PC
CD**

MAGIC & MAYHEM



MADDEN NFL 99

★ £39.99 • EA Sports • Out now

When it comes to American football games, Warren Christmas is never far from the Madden-ing crowd

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166MMX (P200MMX without a 3D accelerator)
Memory 32Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** DirectX 6.0 and Glide 3.0 compliant 3D accelerator
cards; force feedback controllers; modem, network and Internet play **WE SAY** Pentium II
to look really good (EA recommend 300MHz), plus a ten-button gamepad for decent control

PCZONE
RECOMMENDED

If you're the kind of person who finds better things to do in the early hours of the morning than watching American football live on TV (like, say, sleeping), it's probably worth mentioning that the 'Madden' in the title refers to 62-year-old John Madden.

Once a player and a very successful coach, he now makes a living as a TV sports personality and from, er, lending his name (and voice) to EA's series of Gridiron games. In many respects, Big John is a bit like our own Jimmy Hill. Only with lots of chins instead of a single long one.

The thing is, though, if you don't already know who he is, *Madden NFL 99* probably isn't for you. Various facilities are provided for beginners – including three different skill levels, an arcade mode with simplified rules and a new version of *Madden 101* (a multimedia guide to the sport) – but, more than any of the previous titles in the series, this appears to be a game for fans of the sport, not necessarily for fans of sports games.

Aside from improved artificial intelligence, new features – all of which are sure to please *Madden* devotees – include a franchise mode which lets you play as general manager (drafting, signing and trading players), a practice mode for rehearsing individual plays, plus a full team and player editor. Also – and about ruddy time too – there's a play creator which enables you to select a formation and then determine individual player moves and commands.

One improvement over

Madden 98 which even your little sister would appreciate is the graphics. Apparently each player is now made up of 1200 polygons and while we haven't sat and counted (no, really), there's no denying that the game looks brilliant. But while there are plenty of adjustable detail levels, to get the full effect you're going to need a pretty meaty machine – Electronic Arts recommend at least a 300MHz Pentium II with 64Mb RAM and a second-generation 3D accelerator. EA also suggest a ten-button digital joypad and, given the complex controls, we agree. True, there is a simple one-button mode for beginners but that just takes all the fun out of it. In standard mode there are eight commands for offensive rushing alone – but if you're a Gridiron fan who wants the full experience, you'll just have to learn to deal with it.

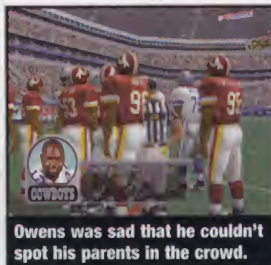
We have, and after several days of practice we're having an awful lot of fun throwing 30-yard passes down the pitch. Funny, though, how almost a decade on from learning the basics of the sport from the original version of *Madden* on the Sega MegaDrive, many of us still can't be arsed with the running game. I suppose some Americans would consider us rather crass. How ironic. **PCZ**

PCZVERDICT

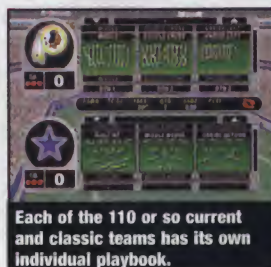
↑ **UPPERS** Stunning graphics and animation • Great two-player game
• Good range of options • Wide customisation features

↓ **DOWNERS** Serious hardware requirements • Complex controls
• Steep learning curve

87 The best there is for fans of the 'other' type of football



Owens was sad that he couldn't spot his parents in the crowd.



Each of the 110 or so current and classic teams has its own individual playbook.

ALSO CONSIDER

MADDEN NFL 98 (EA Sports, £39.99) Last year's version, with outdated statistics and outdated graphics. A good game, though, and it's sure to appear in bargain bins near you soon. **PCZ #59, 87%**

FIFA SOCCER 99 (EA Sports, £39.99) Another classy sports simulation from Electronic Arts for those who want a real game of football. **SEE REVIEW ON PAGE 108**

NFL BLITZ (GT Interactive, £34.99) Fun-looking, seven-on-seven, arcade-style American football from Midway – the people behind *NBA Jam*. We'll be reviewing it in full next issue. **NOT REVIEWED**



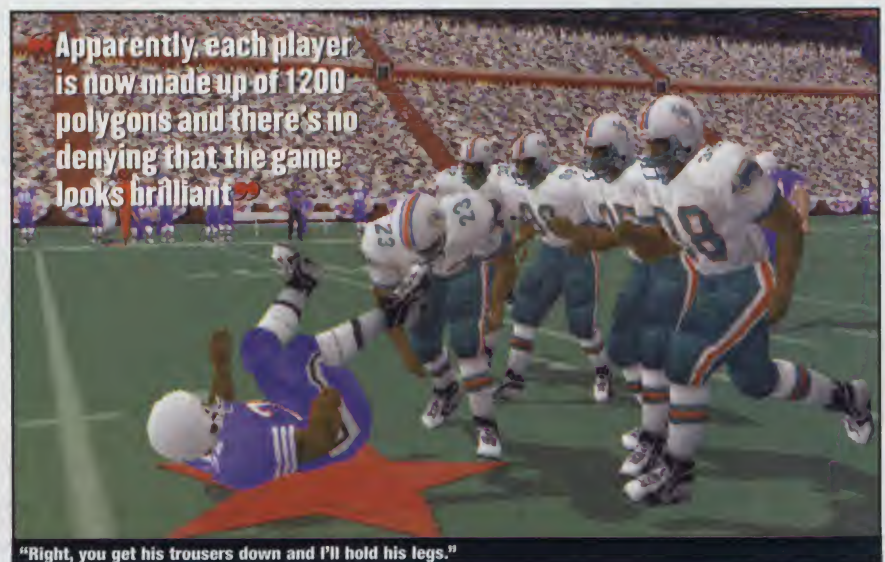
"Come on, then. Think you're hard?"



Finally, you can develop your own (probably crap) play ideas.



See what happens when you start designing your own plays? The other team runs straight past you.



Apparently, each player is now made up of 1200 polygons and there's no denying that the game looks brilliant

"Right, you get his trousers down and I'll hold his legs."

DARK VENGEANCE

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vengeance will be yours.



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KING'S QUEST: MASK OF ETERNITY

★ £34.99 • Sierra • Out now

The future is now. What's past is prologue. Paul Presley has seen the shape of things to come and it's 3D, baby! 3D all the way!

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 32Mb RAM **ALSO REQUIRES** DirectX-compatible graphics card **SUPPORTS** 3Dfx or D3D cards **WE SAY** Pentium II 266 and a lot of memory highly recommended

PCZONE
RECOMMENDED

ALSO CONSIDER

GRIM FANDANGO (LucasArts, £44.99) The other 'New Age' adventure this month. Less 3D, more story. **SEE REVIEW ON PAGE 113**

THE CURSE OF MONKEY ISLAND (LucasArts, £29.99) The last of the great 'old-school' adventures (it would seem). **PCZ #58, 92%**

TOMB RAIDER II (Eidos, £29.99) Similar graphical style, more action-orientated. **PCZ #57, 94%**

KING'S QUEST VII: THE PRINCELESS BRIDE (Sierra, £9.99) Almost four years old and very much yesterday's game. Nice story, though. **PCZ #24, 93%**

Ladies and gentlemen, pray silence and welcome to the next generation of adventure games. After all the build up, all the hype and promises, all the broken hearts, the outraged Internet die-hards and the column inches pressing for caution, the 3D adventure game has finally arrived. *King's Quest VIII* has opened the door and now there's no turning back.

Fortunately, we may not want to turn back. Despite all the optimism being shown by The Industry (see special report on page 30), I'll admit to having been sceptical. I feared we'd end up seeing nothing but *Tomb Raider* wannabes with a few mouse-clicks thrown in for good measure. But having spent sleepless nights with *Mask Of Eternity*, my cautious fears seem unfounded. If this is anything to go by, roll on the future.

CAUTIOUS FEAR #1

One worry was that the storyline – an adventure game's most important aspect – would

somehow be lost, smothered by the graphics. For all the large breasts and playability, *Tomb Raider* (PCZ #45, 95%) could hardly be said to have the most gripping plot in the world (not that this is stopping Hollywood morons from making it into a film).

MOE manages to deliver a tale of traditional Roberta Williams fantasy hokum with plenty of style and panache, and with seemingly minimum effort. More importantly, it gets you hooked and keeps you wanting to come back until your monitor's low-level radiation has burnt through your retinas.

It's the traditional fantasy tale of good and evil. A darkness has spread across the land of Davenport, turning the populace into stone. Only you have survived, having found a piece of the titular mask moments before it struck. Now you have to search

“The 3D adventure game has finally arrived. *King's Quest VIII* has opened the door and now there's no turning back”

the land for the other pieces, return them to their sacred resting place and bring light and (I quote) “sweetness” back to the land.

While the story is actually quite good, the script is less impressive. The lead character has a tendency to say “Zounds!”



“Shh! Can you hear something? A sort of... rumbling?”



As blind dates went, Geoff had been on better.

and “Lo!” far too frequently for a heterosexual male of his calibre, and the accent is the typical plummy, Michael York-style English that every American west

‘family’ game, and the *King's Quest* series has never been known for its dark, penetrating assessments of the human psyche, but there are times when this is a very dark game – and not just in lighting terms. At times it's heavy on the blood, and the characters all seem to take things terribly seriously. A few light touches to relieve the pace wouldn't have gone amiss.

CAUTIOUS FEAR #2

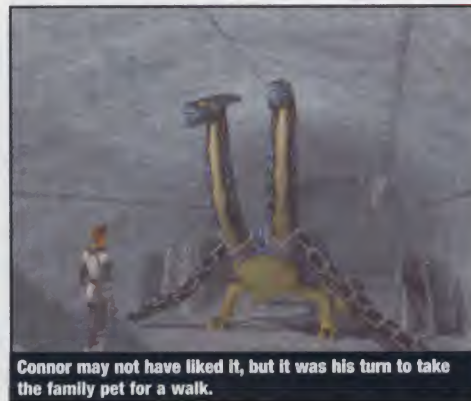
Another worry was that the gameplay would be nothing but running, jumping and fighting – *Tomb Raider* with knobs on. Once again, *MOE* allays those fears pretty well. There is a



He couldn't be sure why, but Mike felt this wasn't going to be the easiest of job interviews.



As family reunions went, Geoff had been to better. (You've already done that one – Ed.)



Connor may not have liked it, but it was his turn to take the family pet for a walk.



Tomb Raider with genuine puzzles? That's not far off the mark, actually.



His daily duties involved jumping, clearly.

“It's a good game, but there are times when you can see the limitations the designers have imposed upon themselves”



Eeny, meeny, miney, mo...



Killing NPCs doesn't affect your progress in the game. Clever that.

lot of combat, and at times a bit too much. It never quite reaches the Lara Croft or *Quake* level of wanton carnage, but when an adventure game has you panting gratefully when a new weapon presents itself, you know something's wrong.

Fortunately, there's still a good balance of puzzles to offset the violence, and for the most part Sierra have done a good job of keeping them intrinsic to the storyline, even if there are a few too many instances of the old 'bring me object A and I'll give you object B' scenario.

The character interaction is also lacking a little. Most of the NPCs you encounter are there to be killed. The townsfolk-as-statues storyline is a good way to get past the problem of having independent characters strolling around, but you can't help wishing there were more than just a few single-location good guys to interact with.

CAUTIOUS FEAR #3

The only other concern about this new genre was that the controls

would be horrible. Point and click was simple: you point, you click. Job's a good 'un. Now we were going to have to master all sorts of confusing key commands to get our character to go where we wanted and do what we commanded.

Luckily, this has proved to be fairly painless, too. *MOE* works by having you run around in third-person using the cursor keys (or remapped equivalents), and moving the camera with the mouse. It's confusing at first, but before long it becomes second nature. You still point and click with the mouse cursor, but now you feel as though there's a greater freedom. This is perhaps the most important feature, separating it from games like *Tomb Raider*. The movement is similar, but the mouse cursor enables a much greater level of interaction with the environment.

There are a few slight graphical problems: there's a modicum of polygon clipping in evidence (limbs passing through walls when you get close and so on), and the camera is annoyingly

tricky to manoeuvre when you're inside smallish rooms, but you can live with it.

OPTIMISTIC PREDICTIONS

The one thing that is most apparent while playing *MoE* is just how good these 3D adventure games are going to be once the designers have had a chance to stretch their legs a little. *MOE* is a good game – let's be clear about that – but there are times when you can see the limitations the designers have imposed upon themselves. It's very much akin to the *Quake/Unreal* situation: *Quake* (PCZ #43, 96%) was a great game; *Unreal* (PCZ #65, 93%) took it all a step further and showed what could really be done with the technology. *Half-Life* (reviewed on page 88) takes it further still. And games like *Gabriel Knight III*, *Simon The Sorcerer 3D* (previewed on page 60) will probably do exactly the same.

For what it's worth, recommendations for the future are these: more characters to interact with; less gratuitous

fighting (and more intense, more dramatic combat when it does happen – this is a storytelling medium after all); more experimentation with puzzles (ie less of the object carrying and more of the lateral thinking/deduction – *Discworld Noir* promises to be like this); and sort out the camera when moving in enclosed areas.

For the moment, however, *King's Quest: Mask Of Eternity* fits the bill. It is good. It's a very playable game, it has a very engaging story, and it's a great advert for the future. Change is good, after all. [M]

PCZVERDICT

UPPERS Good storyline • Good puzzles • Good game

DOWNERS Small annoyances with the software • Not as daring as it could have been

89 The future of adventure games looks rosy indeed

WALKTHROUGH

I HANG AROUND IN BARS...

A sample puzzle from early in the game, just to give you an idea



1 The goal: to get that rope and hook from inside this mill.



2 Unfortunately, the direct approach has its drawbacks.



3 A stroll outside the mill reveals the problem: how to stop that wheel?



4 That old tree looks like it will give. A few strikes with the axe and it's "TIMBERRRR!"



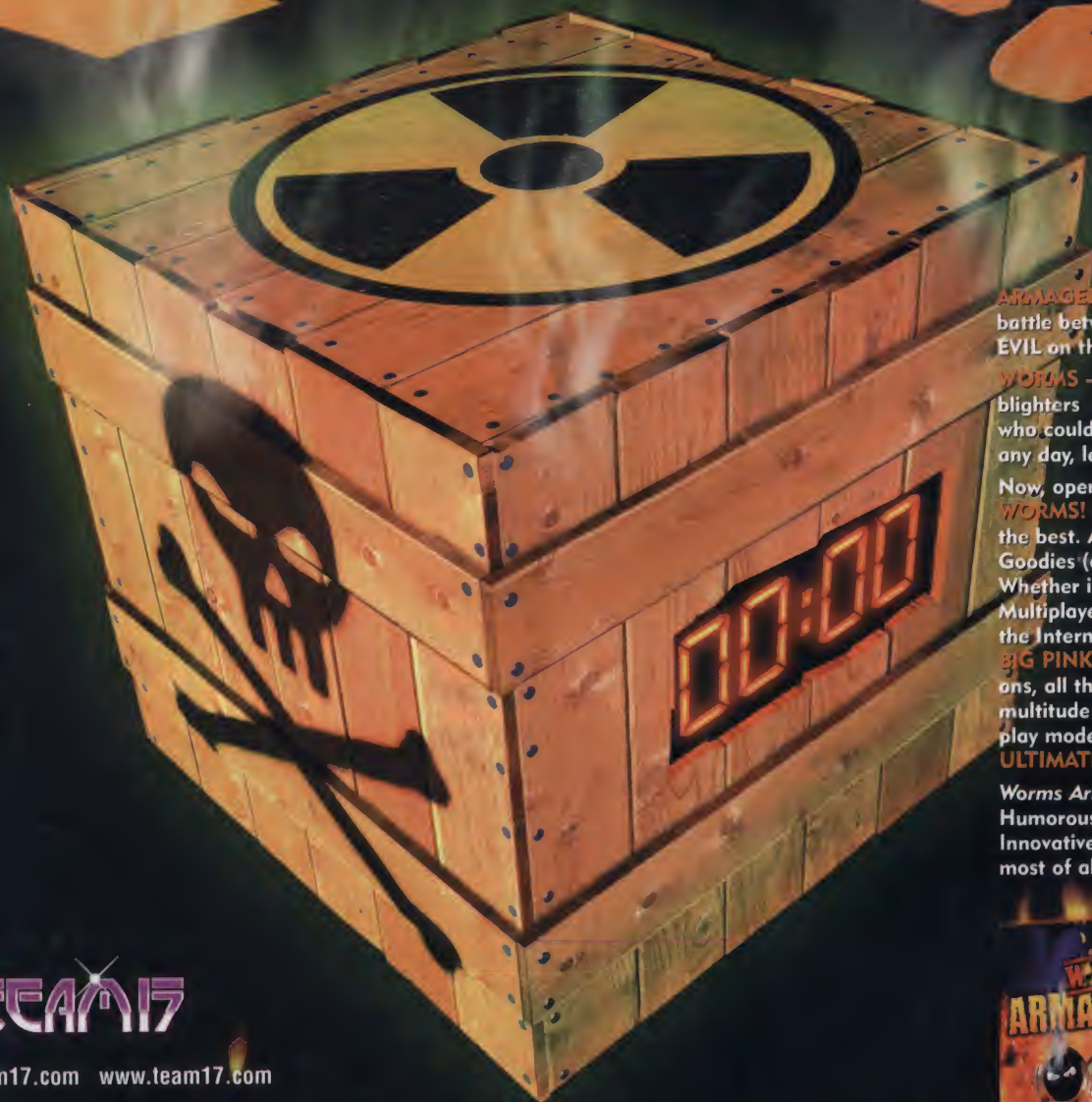
5 The water's ceased flowing and the wheel has stopped, so now I can jump up in safety.



6 And now I have the rope in my possession, I can get on with looting this church.

TICK, TICK,

BOOM!



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WAKE UP! IT'S TIME TO DIE!



CD-ROM

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It's a real 'time sponge' of a game, in that you boot it up, and before you know it days have whizzed by

Gizza kiss, Mister Nasty.

FALLOUT 2



★ £39.99 • Interplay • Out end November '98

A nuclear holocaust can ruin your whole damn day. Luckily, *Fallout 2* probably won't. Painting himself white to deflect the blast: Charlie Brooker

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb RAM **WE SAY** Go for the maximum install if you can, it speeds things up considerably

**PCZONE
RECOMMENDED**

Apocalypse, anyone? *Fallout 2* is an old-skool role-playing game with a dispiriting theme: it takes place in the aftermath of a globally devastating nuclear war. The environment you explore in the game represents the precise opposite of Disneyland: there's little foliage; hardly anyone smiles; drug use is rife and violent death commonplace. If you're planning a move to London in the next few months, here's your training ground.

Of course, the numeric appendage that dangles from the end of the title like a scab of dried mucus from a pensioner's nose

alerts you to the fact that this is a sequel. Back in issue 61 we awarded the original *Fallout* an impressive 91% – a score which some of you felt was a tad low, if anything. While not much to write home about technically, *Fallout* was absorbing, addictive and atmospheric. It also made a pleasant change from the usual RPG staples: orcs, dwarves, and wizards didn't get a look in. It's much the same with *Fallout 2*.

The plot's a bit more 'New-Agey' than before: you play 'the chosen one', a descendant of the first game's main character. As before, there are countless subplots and side-quests to keep you occupied, but the main thrust of the storyline has you searching for a Garden of Eden Creation Kit, which apparently has the power to transform irradiated land into lush green meadows. And then off you go – into an endless vista of

exploration, conversation and unspeakably violent turn-based combat (it's gorier than ever).

The engine that powers the game hasn't changed – it's workmanlike and slow (on anything less than 'large installation' the pauses between locations can be infuriating). The graphics are all familiar, with many of the sprites and locations apparently lifted wholesale →

ALSO CONSIDER

FINAL FANTASY VII (Eidos, £49.99)

Pretty much perfect Japanese role-playing game – quirky, compelling, and huge in scale.

PCZ #66, 93%

FALLOUT (Interplay, £34.99)

Same engine as *Fallout 2*, but with ropier AI and a smaller playing area. Damn good, for all that, mind.

PCZ #61, 91%



Not a very safe place to be. Oh no. Run away!

SO WHAT'S NEW?

Played the first *Fallout*? Want to know what's changed? Or perhaps you're just reading this on the toilet, and you'll do anything to pass the time? Whatever. Here's the list...

It's set 50 years on and it's bigger. The action in *Fallout 2* takes place half a century after the original came to a close; you play a descendent of the first game's star. The area you're exploring (still based on Northern California) is significantly larger than *Fallout* numero uno's scorched wildernesses.

THE NPCs ARE SMARTER

For those of you who don't understand sad geek jargon, NPC stands for Non-Player Character. This refers to anyone you meet or interact with during the game. Also, you make close 'pals' who join you on your quest, piling in alongside you each time you get into a fight.

In the original *Fallout*, you were dogged almost continually by an exceptionally stupid NPC called Ian. Ian was okay most of the time, but in combat situations he tended to act like... well, like a jerk. If you gave him an Uzi, he'd spray it around the room without checking whether your head was in the way first. *Fallout 2*'s NPCs have had their intelligence levels boosted, so careless gunfire is less of a worry. You also have more control over their behaviour yourself, and can issue orders relating to their style of fighting.

Having said that, there are problems. If a fight takes place around a doorway, you tend to get a log-jam of characters queuing up behind one who's standing still – and you can't get past them either. Doh.

FEWER RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

No longer do you have to dread crossing the wastelands for fear of annoying, time-wasting spats with rad-scorpions and the like. In *Fallout 2* you can get hold of a clunky old car and move from town to town with the minimum amount of fuss.

MORE BLUE LANGUAGE

The original *Fallout* was nice and gritty and all that, and so is *Fallout 2*. In fact, the sequel seems determined to outdo its predecessor in one respect – the dialogue is *filthy*. It's almost as if someone loaded a blunderbuss with swear words and fired it at the script. The 'F' word in particular occurs with all the rapid-fire frequency of an angry kick drum in a particularly frenetic drum 'n' bass workout.

Stands to reason, really: these characters are living in a post-apocalyptic landscape filled with radioactive mutants, drug-dealing gangsters, genuinely horrifying monsters and an overriding atmosphere of bleak despair. Would you give a toss about a few rude words under such circumstances? Of course not. You'd be *beyond* shock. In fact you'd be so bitter you'd spit out a wasp's nest each time you opened your mouth. It'd be 'f' this and 'c' that every moment of the day, even if you were talking to your maiden aunt. You can 'filter out' the invective out thanks to the conscientious options screen, if you like. But that would make you a f***** c***.



Cuh. Now who's going to clear up all these split guts, eh? Eh?

"Mmm... Don't know what it is, but I bet it does something clever."



"Scuse me. Got a light? Aaaaaargggghh!"



Here's how Posh Spice will look like in the year 2078. Watch and weep, Beckham.



A post-apocalyptic boxing tournament yesterday.



Don't step in the green goo, it'll ruin your shoes.



Something tells me you'd best not go near that lot.



Looks like they're filming a pornographic film. Mallo's probably in there somewhere.

from the original program. What's more, the kind of situations you encounter aren't massively different either.

Sounds damning, but none of those issues make this a *bad* game. The original *Fallout* was very, very good, and so is *Fallout 2*. It's still peculiarly compelling – a real 'time sponge' of a game, in that you'll boot it up, and before you know it days have whizzed by. If you've 'done' the original

and enjoyed it, you'll like the sequel. Think of it as another entry in a popular series of paperback thrillers, or a new episode of your favourite TV show – not different, but familiar and fun. If you *haven't* played the first one and you're curious, you might as well start with this one, because it's the bigger of the two – unless you're a bit pressed for cash, in which case look for a cheap *Fallout*. [C]

PCZ VERDICT

UPPERS Massive, absorbing adventure • Adult content and language • Genuinely funny in places
DOWNERS Very similar to *Fallout*

86 Like the first one, but bigger

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IN WATER.



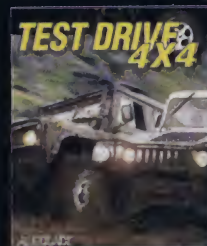
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FIFA 99

★ £39.99 • EA Sports • Out now

Hot on the heels of *World Cup 98* comes *FIFA 99*. But is it worth buying if you've got *WC98*? Jeremy Wells gives some pointers

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 32Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** 3Dfx **WE SAY** A P200, a 3D card and a joypad or two are a must

PCZONE CLASSIC

ALSO CONSIDER

WORLD CUP 98 (EA Sports, £39.99) was the best football game around before *FIFA 99*. If you must re-live last summer's tournament then it's still worth having, especially if you can pick it up cheap. **PCZ #65, 91%**

SENSIBLE SOCCER EUROPEAN CLUB EDITION (GT Interactive, £29.99) is an improvement over its predecessor, *Sensi 2000* (PCZ #58, 90%). A triumph of gameplay over graphics. **PCZ #69, 90%**

WORLD LEAGUE SOCCER (Eidos Interactive, £29.99) There's no comparison in terms of graphics, and the gameplay isn't too refined. The heading is still the best seen in a footie game, though. **PCZ #62, 70%**

ACTUA SOCCER 2 (Gremlin Interactive, £29.99) is looking a little dated, but still manages to remain instantly playable. **PCZ #59, 90%**

THREE LIONS (Take 2 Interactive, £19.99) Even at this price, it's not worth the effort, sporting a very suspect target system and laughable player graphics and animation. **PCZ #65, 60%**

You could count the number of man-hours lost through playing *World Cup 98* last summer at the PC ZONE

office on one hand – but you'd need the help of the entire population of Canada to hold out both hands before you came anywhere near an accurate estimation. Finally, after what seemed like years of trying, EA Sports had managed to marry an almost perfect blend of graphics, control and gameplay and produce a football game that played as good as it looked.

It was by no means perfect, however. Despite the introduction of a variable speed feature, it still wasn't as smooth as Gremlin's *Actua Soccer*. The hundreds of motion-captured moves meant the players' actions might have been more realistic, but uninterruptible animations meant you didn't always feel in total control. The AI – the weak point of so many football games – was still often questionable, especially where the goalkeepers were concerned. Why the hell did the ball fly off the pitch when you tried to retrieve it from close to the sideline?

It may be only a few months since *World Cup 98* was released, but the developers have been beavering away on *FIFA 99* since the end of last year. They've looked long and hard at their best-selling *World Cup* game and listened to the feedback and criticisms that were levelled at *WC98*. The result is a faster, smoother and even more playable game than before.

Yep, *FIFA 99* is even better than *World Cup 98*, and that really is saying something. All the above niggles have been addressed to varying

degrees and, overall, *FIFA 99* is a lot less frustrating and a damn sight more enjoyable than previous *FIFA* games. Okay, it may not look that different, but it's certainly a lot smoother, with a 20-odd per cent increase in the frame rate. As well as a whole host of new moves, there are now interruptible animations, so you no longer have to wait for your players to complete their animation cycles before attempting a new action. The AI is still a little suspect at times, but the CPU-controlled players now get into better positions and there's a panic button you can press that causes your keeper to come screaming off his line and retrieve the ball.

New 'binding logic' means you can run up to and retrieve the ball from the touch line without it flying into orbit and, perhaps most significantly, you can now chest the ball down to other players and

“Overall, *FIFA 99* is a lot less frustrating and a damn sight more enjoyable than previous *FIFA* games”

turn a lot quicker, which speeds the game up no end. There's a whole host of tournaments, leagues and custom competitions to take part in, as well as EA Sports' own European Super League. The presentation is up to the usual high standard and the commentary, sound effects and music are in a different league (ahem) from the competition. You can even edit and transfer players and play almost instantly with just two clicks of the mouse, thanks to a handy new 'Quick Start' option.

So what's wrong with it? Well, the keepers tend to parry the ball into their own net a bit too often, and the AI is still questionable at times, though this is an area that, arguably, no developer has been able to perfect. It's also still way too easy to win the ball from an opponent and make successful tackles. When you have possession, you really should be able to shield the ball from the opposition before playing the next pass or taking a shot. Because



Graphically, it's even better than before, with players and stadiums recreated in exacting detail.

the tackles come flying in so quickly, you're often forced to pass the ball almost immediately or almost certainly lose it. Keeping possession against an opponent who's got the hang of tackling is very difficult indeed, which means it can become a bit of a slog in the middle of the pitch. That said, once you've mastered a couple of the special 'skill' moves, retaining possession does



Interruptible animations speed up the game and allow for very slick, quick build-up play.

PCZ VERDICT

UPPERS Great graphics and animation • Slick presentation • Numerous tournament and league options • Great player control and movement

DOWNERS Tackling still a little too easy • High-spec machine required for higher detail settings • At least two 'score almost every time' bugs

92 Still the best football game available for the PC



FIFA 99 offers four speed settings to choose from.





New mini cut-scenes after fouls and goals are often a bit of a lark.



Amusing cut-scenes make a welcome return for FIFA 99.



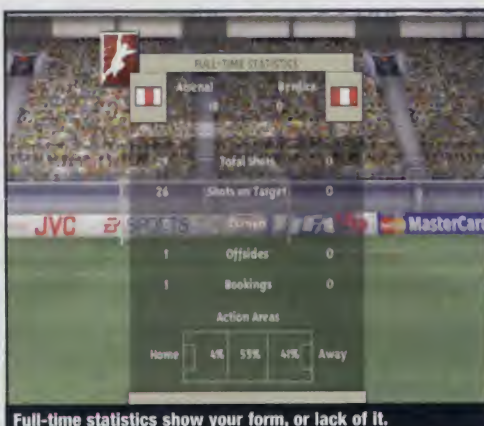
Instruct your keeper to come roaring off his line by pressing a new 'panic' button.



FIFA 99 is a lot smoother than past FIFA efforts.



You'll need a lot of skill moves to keep possession.



Full-time statistics show your form, or lack of it.



You can transfer players and edit the starting line-ups.



Arsenal: dancing prodigies? No.

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CAESAR III

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For further information contact: Cendant Software UK, 2 Beacontree Plaza,
Gillette Way, Reading, Berkshire RG2 0BS Tel: 0118 920 9111

Impression



The train to hell, as Chris Rea didn't sing.



Go on, have a fag. It won't kill you.

GRIM FANDANGO

★ £39.99 • LucasArts • Out now

Is the adventure game really dead? This one certainly is. Emerging from his crypt:
Steve Hill

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 32Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** 3D accelerator cards through Direct3D **WE SAY** More is quicker

PCZONE CLASSIC

ALSO CONSIDER

THE CURSE OF MONKEY ISLAND (LucasArts, £39.99) The third instalment of the classic series. Not actually as great as everyone thinks.

PCZ #58, 92%

FULL THROTTLE (Virgin, 14.99) The same geezer also designed this motorcycle oddity, which was highly fancied, if a little short.

PCZ #27, 92%

DAY OF THE TENTACLE (Virgin, £14.99 with *Sam & Max*) Kickin' it old-skool, Tim Schafer's first big game for LucasArts is still revered by those in the know.

PCZ #7, 87%

SAM & MAX (Virgin, £14.99 with *DOT*) Let dog see rabbit in this classic gag-laden road movie of a game.

PCZ #37, 93%

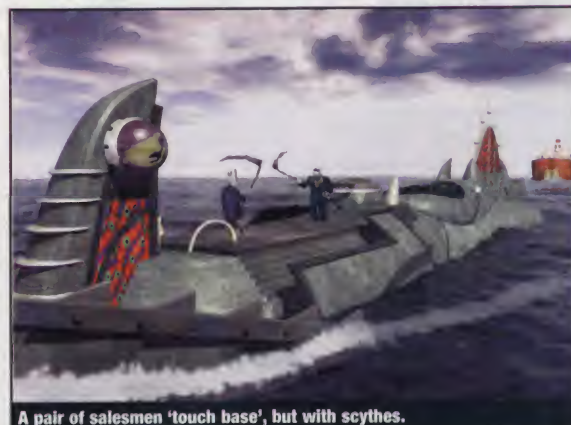
For some time now, a number of self-appointed experts – not least our good selves – have been sounding the bell for adventure games (see report on page 30), claiming that the genre is all but washed up, mercilessly crushed beneath the weight of first-person murder and visceral arcade thrills. Of course, there was a time when adventures were 'all the rage', but they now represent little more than a quaint throwback to an earlier, more innocent, age. It's all over. Finished. Kaput. Gone. Or is it? If anyone can breath life back into the genre, it's LucasArts, pioneers of adventures as we know them, and the team responsible for some genuinely seminal titles. Incidentally, to put things in perspective, consider that when Culture Club were first mincing up the charts, adventure games largely consisted of 'North-South-East-West-Your skull was cleaved'. If the sweaty youngsters pawing at their rubber keyboards back then could have magically been shown a preview of things to come, it would almost

certainly have been dismissed as the stuff of a madman's dream.

Much like the story behind *Grim Fandango*. Step forward, Manuel Calavera, travel agent at the Department of Death, flogging luxury packages to souls on their four-year journey to eternal rest. For sins committed in the living world, Manny has been sentenced to his own personal purgatory, awarded the ultimate dead-end job: a salesman. But it's not all barefaced lying and expense account lunches spent kowtowing to clients, making generic conversation and shamelessly feigning interest in their lives while being unable to look into their eyes without seeing the dollar signs of commission. Well, actually it is, but Manny is going through a bad patch, and a long time has passed since he last qualified for a set of steak knives, let alone a pair of Eurostar tickets. Having once been able to sell sand to arabs and snow to eskimos, Manny is now struggling to make his quota, and can't move on until he does. Something is clearly amiss, and it turns



Not Zippy on acid, but your hapless sidekick Glottis.



A pair of salesmen 'touch base', but with scythes.



That Kate Winslett looks like she's lost a few pounds.

Manny starts the third year of the game as captain of his ship.





In year two of the game, Manny runs a casino.



Manny reaping a soul in the Land of The Living.

← out that he's caught in the middle of an embezzlement ring that's preventing him from getting the right clients. With your help, Manny soon finds this out and steals a prime prospect, starting a chain of events that not only threaten his job, but the eternal destiny of his soul, not to mention several weeks of your life.

TV PARTY

Clearly, the story is a nonsense, but it's presented in such a stylish manner that you unquestioningly accept whatever gibberish is thrown at you, becoming wholly absorbed in the technicolour fantasy world that lives in your special telly. Drawing inspiration from the films *Chinatown*, *Casablanca* and *The Big Sleep*, the game's four-year saga intertwines the themes of classic film noir with the exotic mythology of ancient Mexico; although the less pretentious could just as rightfully claim that it's *Ren And Stimpy* meets *The Nightmare Before Christmas*.

Adopting a fresh 3D look, the graphics are nothing less than sensational, with or without an

actually turning to look at objects, bypassing the traditional frustration of trying to interact with everything. Of course, the usual adventure game rules apply: for instance, rather than simply pointing out a crucial dog-tag, you have to get a metal detector from a dizzy security woman, who then throws it into a gigantic tray of cat litter, forcing you to trawl through some man-sized turds. That sort of thing. The puzzles certainly aren't easy, and often involve traversing the same areas several times, although tasks can be worked on simultaneously.

SMILE

LucasArts have always been renowned for their comedy, and while there is a great deal of clever smile humour in *Grim Fandango*, there are very few dog-laughs to be had. In fact the humour is in a far more bitter vein than previous outings, taking thinly veiled swipes at several sections of society, including salesmen, secretaries, gamblers,



With more costume changes than Madonna, Manny begins year four with this little number. He could still do with a pan of scouse down his neck though.

puppy by squeezing it too hard, and much of the game involves Manny exploiting his idiocy for his own personal gain. He does

have some feelings though, and a love interest is thrown into the mix quite early in the proceedings, providing the basis for numerous capers.

Designed by Tim Schafer – whose CV includes *Day Of The Tentacle* and *Full Throttle* – *Grim Fandango* represents

LucasArts at their creative best. A subtle blend of lateral thinking, arcade puzzles, bizarre settings, outlandish characters and seamless cut-scenes, it's a joy to play (apart from when you get stuck – expect the *PC ZONE* walkthrough to come to your aid soon). Indeed, with its expert direction, costumes, characters, music and atmosphere, it would actually make a superb film. As it stands, it's a great game. If the doom-mongers are to be believed, and it really is last orders for adventure games, then *Grim Fandango* at least provides us with a f***ing good lock-in. [M]

“With its expert direction, costumes, characters, music and atmosphere, it would actually make a superb film”

accelerator card. All of the shots on this page were taken with the game running in software only, and in some ways they look more real, the 3Dfx version having a trademark ‘plasticity’ look about it. Whatever, the game looks fantastic, and has an interface to match, the lead character's head

the working class, beatniks, morons and schizophrenics. Other than the silver-tongued Calavera, the other constant character is his sidekick and driver, Glottis, an obese simpleton with a penchant for cars and gambling. Essentially harmless, he's the kind of person who would accidentally strangle a



Manny prepares to enter The Petrified Forest. The tit.

PCZ VERDICT

- UPPERS Sensational graphics • Strong characters • Bitter humour
- DOWNERS A lot of running about • Ludicrous puzzles • Some excruciating songs

90 LucasArts at their best



Developed in close conjunction with
1998 European Champion Alexander Hoffmann

Choose to race 125, 250 or 500cc bikes

Race against clock, computer or up to 15
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Multiple camera angles including TV style replay

Frighteningly accurate speed, power and
handling characteristics

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EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

MICROSOFT COMBAT FLIGHT SIMULATOR

★ £49.99 (£10 rebate for *Flight Sim 98* owners) • Microsoft • Out now

The second WWII flight sim of the month, from the established masters of aeronautical realism. **Paul Presley** encounters the horrors of an unreal war

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** Force feedback joysticks, 3D cards, flightsticks, rudders and all that jazz **WE SAY** Chuggy McChugster on anything less than a P200 with 3D support

This is a cold, cold game. Unlike this month's other WWII flight sim (*European Air War*, reviewed on page 126), which tries to create a real sense of being there, and practically invites you into the game with a friendly handshake and offers of casual sex, Microsoft's effort

ALSO CONSIDER

EUROPEAN AIR WAR (MicroProse, £39.99) A far more enjoyable experience all round, although the flight and damage models probably aren't as good. Not that we can say for sure, never having killed anyone in real life.

SEE REVIEW ON PAGE 126

WARBIRDS (Interactive Magic, £19.99) Similar to *Air Warrior III*, *Warbirds* is aimed squarely at the online market. Good fun except in single-player mode, although realism is hardly the word of the day.

PCZ #70, 85%

FLIGHT SIMULATOR 98 (Microsoft, £39.95) Maximum realism, minimum friendliness. Loved by propeller heads the world over for its customisability and realistic flight models. Like a train set, it can be upgraded with a seemingly unlimited supply of Internet-distributed scenery and extra planes.

PCZ #55, 94%

seems content to revel in the mistakes of its civil-based sibling by going all-out on the engine dynamics and then forgetting that people without a C++ Honours degree are going to have to use it.

Okay, that's a slight exaggeration. But to say *MCFS* is user-friendly would be like saying Jim Davidson is funny. Let's pluck an example at random from the key commands: radio communication. Which key do you suppose you have to press to activate radio communication? 'R' perhaps? Nope. 'C' maybe – for Communication? No.. Er, 'T' for Talk? No. It's 'B' – for Bloody stupid key assignments, perhaps. And why not 'R'? Because 'R', ladies and gentlemen of the jury, is used for setting time compression. Of course!

FIRST LINKS, NOW FLIGHT SIM

MCFS also suffers in that it's not very engaging in its efforts to lure you in and keep you there. The training modes are pretty good, with a typically angry American officer shouting commands at you as though you're an imbecile. The single-player missions are also quite interesting, with some nice quirks to them: shoot a German officer's staff car from under the Eiffel Tower, or rescue a downed pilot from a German airbase, for example.

But *MCFS* falls over in the campaigns. There's no sense of realism on offer here. The best way to describe this is to outline a sample career of my own. I created a character and started with the USAF in the Battle over Europe (you can also play through the Battle of Britain for either team, incidentally). My first mission was a simple patrol – easy enough, fairly quiet, no kills. My second mission, however, didn't occur until almost two

missions as though nothing had happened.

In total, my career (spanning two years) took place in just a dozen or so missions, and I died in at least half of them. Out of curiosity I restarted a new career in the same service and discovered that I was replaying

“To say *Microsoft Combat Flight Simulator* is user-friendly would be like saying Jim Davidson is funny”

weeks later. Suddenly I was taking off from a different airfield with a whole new bunch of wingmen. No attempt at forging a realistic career was being made (unlike *European Air War* – reviewed on page 126 – which does this very well). Worse still, I got shot down, killed in my prime. However, it didn't seem to do my career any harm, as I was still able to move on to the next

exactly the same missions all over again. No attempt at dynamic campaigning, not even a hint of slight randomisation. All very poor, frankly.

YOU'RE BEING PICKY, SURELY?

Certainly the engine is very nice – one of the best I've experienced to date. But then you'd expect no less from the *Flight Sim 98*

people. The eight aircraft on offer all behave with subtle (and sometimes not so subtle) differences. The sound is first-rate too – really thumping cannon noises and engine sounds that appear to be spot on. Also, and much more importantly, the dogfights are particularly good. The enemy planes behave with impressively varying levels of intelligence, and you never once feel as though you're up against mindless computer drones.

The much-heralded damage models are a touch confusing to evaluate, in that there's usually very little evidence of their



Biggles chooses an inappropriate time to file his nails.

SIX OF THE BEST

MCFS only has six aircraft for you to fly (eight if you count the Spitfire and Bf 109 variants), but at least they look good

The P-51D Mustang was first built by the Germans for the British and then given to the Americans. No joke here, just an interesting fact.

Don't know much about this one. Was it in the war? Most famous for trapping pilots' wooden legs at inopportune moments.



P-51D MUSTANG



SUPERMARINE SPITFIRE



At 15,000 feet the cities look fine. At five feet it's a different matter.



Battersea power station, back when Battersea deserved some power.



The country terrain looks simply marvellous, darling.

existence. I'm sure that under the bonnet, so to speak, every bullet is calculated, categorised and assessed, but on the surface it always seems as though the plane you're shooting at is firing a mass of confetti at you. Occasionally a wing falls off or a plume of smoke erupts, but it just

doesn't 'feel' any more or less realistic than any other game.

Graphically it varies. The planes themselves are very nice, and the mountains, valleys and other 'countryside' areas look superb. However, the urban landscapes don't fare quite so well – Microsoft have never

managed to get this right. Fly over London, for example, and you get a large flat 'city' texture-map with several famous landmarks dropped on top. There's quite a lot of them, agreed, but only in the Central London area. And besides, it has an eerie 'ghost-like' air to it. It just doesn't feel like a real city;

instead it's more like one of those architect's models you see in town halls.

What Microsoft *have* got is a very good flight engine, and for some people that's more than enough. I'm sure that *Microsoft Flight Sim* fans will lap up its realism, its modelling and the

options to update the game manually with customised scenery disks and the like. But for the rest of us, it's just one of the first games in what's soon to be a crowded WWII flight sim market. One of the first, but certainly not one of the best. **PCZ**

PCZVERDICT

UPPERS The flight models •

Non-urban terrain • Dogfights and the enemy AI

DOWNERS The campaign engine •

Urban landscapes • Less friendly than your in-laws

79 Puts up a damned good fight

Better known as the Jug until British soldiers started cracking jokes to US pilots about having great... Macho pride took over and it was renamed the Thunderbolt.



P-47D

The Hawker Hurricane, always a poor second to the more glamorous Spitfire. WWII's equivalent of being Paul Ross.



HAWKER HURRICANE

Unlike the Bf 109s, the Focke-wulf Fw109A actually had landing gear that wouldn't buckle as soon as you turned on the engine. Something of a step forward for the Germans.



FOCKE-WULF Fw109A

The Messerschmitt Bf 109E was designed by none other than Willy Messerschmitt. As though the surname wasn't bad enough.



MESSERSCHMITT Bf 109E

ENEMY
ENGAGED

APACHE

HAVOC

88%

066

10

PC CD-ROM
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SHOGO: MOBILE ARMOR DIVISION

★ £39.99 • Microids • Out November

The *Quake* clones are coming thick and fast. And after playing *Shogo*, *Richie Shoemaker* does just that

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 32Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** Direct3D **WE SAY** Actually runs very well on those specs, in low detail

PCZONE CLASSIC

First-person shooters seem to live and die by the strength of their multiplayer game. While it is the single-player experience that initially wows us, its lustre soon fades, and within a couple of weeks the game is either relegated to the cupboard or left for the odd deathmatch. Essentially that's the difference between *Quake II* and everything else. *Quake II*'s single-player game is arguably the weakest of all its peers and yet remains the game of choice for nearly every deathmatch aficionado. Only time will tell if *Half-Life*'s multiplayer game will take over the world. But one thing's for sure: its single-player game will. And *Shogo: Mobile Armor Division* will follow close behind.

“With strong, identifiable characters, stylish animation and an ever-evolving plot, it's a game that draws you in from beginning to end”

Developers Monolith have taken all the elements that have staled the single-player first-person game and replaced them with simple storytelling and ingenious scripting. The result is an original mix of traditional and *Mech*-style first-person combat, combined with Japanese Animé art. *Shogo* isn't your usual run-of-the-mill *Quake* clone. With strong, identifiable characters, stylish animation and an ever-evolving plot, it's a game that draws you in from beginning to end.

SO WHAT'S THE STORY?

Well, it goes a little something like this: Cronos, a desolate colony and a rich source of kato energy, is at war with itself. The CMC (Cronian Mining Consortium), having fought and won control of the planet from the UCA (United Corporate Authority), now finds itself weakened by The Fallen – a highly organised terrorist army led by Gabriel. The Fallen are all but in control and an uneasy truce is sought between the CMC and the UCA. The only way the UCA can regain authority is to eliminate The Fallen leader. As Sanjuro, a UCA commander, your goal is to find and destroy him.

We'd normally dismiss this scene setting as just hokum, but it's important stuff that is built upon with a host of characters that expand the story. There's also a love interest between our hero Sanjuro and Kathryn, daughter of Nathaniel Akkajaru, your commanding officer. Suffice to say that by the end of the game you'll be begging for more. And

thanks to the open-ended story, you can bet that there definitely will be more.

Missions are divided equally between traditional first-person combat and romping about in Mecha or MCAs (Mobile Combat Armour). The MCA missions are nothing like the traditional *MechWarrior* fare, and the *Quake*-like controls are identical in both elements of play save for the ability to utilise a power jump and transform into a fast-moving tank, which serves little purpose except

ALSO CONSIDER

HALF-LIFE (Cendant, £39.99) The new standard by which all future 3D shooters will be measured, *Half-Life* makes a mockery of more recent efforts (ie *Unreal* and *Klingon*) in terms of level design.

See review on page 88

HEAVY GEAR (Activision, £39.99)

If you want more simulation with your 30ft first-person action then you should wait for the sequel. Or *MechWarrior III*. Or *Starsiege*.

PCZ #59, 70%

JEDI KNIGHT: DARK FORCES II

(LucasArts/Virgin, £44.95) *Star Wars* *Quake*-style with wonderful storytelling and great level design. Not the best, but still superb.

PCZ #55, 94%

QUAKE II (Activision, £44.99) Still doing the rounds despite its weak single-player game, although for deathmatching there's still no equal.

PCZ #59, 97%

in multiplayer games. The action is just as frenetic in both styles of play, although thanks to some beautiful smoke effects, MCA combat can be incredibly tense as you try to shoot through the fog of debris, only to see a salvo of rockets coming towards you. The lighting is also excellent, with explosions that light up the screen and cause your eyes to reel around in their sockets. Then there's the muzzle flashes, bullet marks and sparking fire from machine-guns. Just look at the screenshots and imagine it all moving. Great, eh?

PROBLEM CORNER

Initially the levels seem a bit small, but you often have to negotiate your way through them a couple of times as paths become blocked and reinforcements arrive to halt your advance. It all helps to prevent you from getting lost and adds to the immediacy, as you end up concentrating more on fighting the enemy than on getting lost and giving up. In some missions you even have colleagues to back



Where's that Chris Anderson? He was here a second ago.



Is that a missile headed straight for my...



You could play in third-person mode, but it's not advisable.

COMBAT TROUSERS

Ever had one of those days when you don't know what to wear? If you want to get noticed on the King's Road, try one of these for size

ORDOG

Nicknamed Vanilla by one MCA jock (ie me), this Mecha offers the best mix of armour and speed. It has a fast vehicle mode, which can be quite tricky to handle.

ENFORCER

Probably the best all-round MCA available. Although slightly more responsive in vehicle mode, it's not quite as nippy as the Ordog.

AKUMA

The fastest Mecha in the game, it's the best choice for pilots who prefer to run away when the shit hits the fan.

PREDATOR

This is the baby to take into situations where you've got nothing to lose apart from your life. Superior armour comes at the price of speed and agility.



That'll teach you to just stand there.



The cheese & onion-coloured cannon. Mmm, tastes good.



Lived in splendour, died in chaos.



Incoming. Incoming!


you up, and you find that, unlike *Half-Life*, you actually care about them, especially as one of them is a former girlfriend.

It's not all good news for *Shogo* though. On the easiest setting the game is far too simple to complete. The AI is also ropy, scraping in marginally below the level set by *Quake II* a year ago: you can stand in full view of an enemy and they'll still fail to see you, detecting you only when you get within a certain distance. Enemy soldiers also seem to have a problem operating doors and lifts – they're far too static for their own good.

In terms of the sound, the Japanese pop that introduces the game is initially laughable, but it then becomes strangely endearing. The weapons sound beefy and the voices are excellent. And the graphics? Well, they're superb too.

We played a few multiplayer games in the office and it was all fairly nondescript until we played the MCA levels. These proved to be something entirely new: we could choose from four different MCAs, crush cars and leap onto tall buildings. It's a shame you can't destroy more of the scenery,

although what with all the smoke and debris flying about it's difficult to see how any current PC would be able to handle the strain.

If there is any justice in the world *Shogo* will be looked back on as one of the best 3D games of its time. Personally speaking, apart from *Half-Life*, *Shogo* is the best game I've played this year. I finished it in two days on the easiest setting, and I'm definitely going to go back and do it on the hardest level there is. Who knows, with a bit of luck I'll finish it before the sequel comes out. 

PCZ VERDICT

UPPERS Superb story and an original blend of genres • Impressive arsenal, with meaty sounds and great graphical effects • Direct3D-native – should work with all 3D cards

DOWNERS Undemanding easy level • Weak AI compared to its contemporaries • A few more enemy variations needed

92 One of the best 3D games of its time



No 3D game would be complete without a shotgun.

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PC CD-ROM



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off-road racing
game that makes its
own damn road, so
put on your helmet,
you'll need your
head to win.

EUROPEAN AIR WAR

★ £39.99 • MicroProse • Out now

We're about to be inundated with World War II flight sims. MicroProse let *Jeremy Wells* take their entrant to the virtual skies

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 32Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** 3Dfx, Direct3D
WE SAY Recommended specs of a P200, a 3D card and a Direct X-compatible joystick, throttle, rudder pedals and sound card are more realistic

**PCZONE
RECOMMENDED**

Comparatively speaking, it's going to be difficult to rate *EAW* considering the number of other WWII flight sims that are about to hit the shelves (see Everybody's Doin' It panel on opposite page), so we're going to score it on its own merits and leave all the comparable stuff to a future Supertest.

In terms of options and aircraft, *EAW* appears to be ahead of the chasing pack. You can fly up to 20 different, accurately rendered aircraft, each with its own authentic flight model and cockpit, including Britain's Supermarine Spitfire, the US Army Air Force's P-38 Lightning, and the Luftwaffe's Messerschmitt Bf.109. An unprecedented 256 aircraft can be in the air simultaneously, so you can expect some pretty massive dogfight scenarios. Unless you have top ninja kit, however, expect the frame rate to suffer when the screen begins to fill up with planes.

There's a nice variety of instant action and Quick Start missions, including Fighter Sweep, Bomb Target, Escort Flight, Intercept and Interdiction (which is like search and destroy – I looked it up). There's also a rather cool campaign mode that enables you to begin a career with one of the three air forces in Europe (US Army Air Force, Royal Air Force or the German Luftwaffe). Once you've selected your nationality, you're asked to select a specific campaign (the Battle of Britain or the mainland European conflict) and then a Fighter Group. Each group is

historically accurate, as are the aircraft and types of missions that you fly.

In fact, the attention to detail is in many ways quite overwhelming. I have no unhealthy interest in the subject matter, but that's not to say it was lost on me. In fact, the way everything seemed to fit together went a long way towards developing the atmosphere of the game, and put the air forces' role into perspective with the rest of the war. For example, if your fighter group manages to destroy a key German facility that was working on the V-1 rocket, the rocket appears later in time than it did in the actual war. What's more, the overall state of the war is updated after every mission so that your actions have an immediate impact, and you actually feel like you're making a difference. Unlike in *1942: Pacific Air War* (PCZ #17, 89%), the locations of your enemy are randomised so that every mission is less predictable. If you manage to stay alive and win promotion, you gain more control of your squadron, until eventually you decide who flies what and how.

VISION ON

In terms of visuals, it's pretty impressive – as long as you've got a 3D card tucked away inside your Pentium 200. The aircraft detail is good, and although the terrain starts to look a little sad at low level, the 3D objects certainly cut the mustard. In terms of its rivals, it's better than *Combat Flight Simulator*, but from what we've seen so far not quite as impressive as *Jane's WWII Fighter*. It's difficult to comment on the authenticity of the flight models and aircraft themselves, but notable differences in performance are quite apparent even to the novice.

ALSO CONSIDER

COMBAT FLIGHT SIMULATOR

(Microsoft, £39.99) This is bound to attract those turned on by *Flight Sim 98*. It uses a revamped FS98 engine, though it appears to be graphically inferior and you get to fly fewer aircraft. You can, however, modify and create your own aircraft.

SEE REVIEW ON PAGE 118

FLYING CORPS GOLD (Empire

Interactive, £29.99) It's starting to look a little dated now, but remains very enjoyable nevertheless. System requirements remain quite high.

PCZ #59, 92%

AIR WARRIOR III (Interactive

Magic, £29.99) Aimed squarely at the online market, but still supports single-player jaunts. Graphically it's inferior in every way, but system requirements are pretty low-spec-friendly.

PCZ #62, 80%

There is a 257-page manual, but the interface is quite functional and it's not hard to get started, especially if you opt for the most forgiving flight model and unlimited ammo, and switch off 'realistic gunnery' and mid-air collisions, or go the whole hog and make yourself invulnerable. Essentially you can adjust just about everything to customise the game to your liking, so the learning curve is never too steep, and the game grows with you.

Overall, *EAW* is a good, solid and thoroughly absorbing flight sim that will appeal as much to the novice as to the die-hard propeller head. It's not perfect, but the competition has got a lot to live up to. **PCZ**

PCZ VERDICT

UPPERS

More than 20 aircraft to fly
 • Up to 256 planes in the air simultaneously
 • Dynamic game world and strong campaign mode

DOWNERS

Graphically not the best we've seen
 • High-spec machine required for higher detail settings
 • Terrain a bit sad at low level

87 Packed full of features and aircraft



Another one bites the dust.

All the aircraft look pretty smart even on the lowest detail setting.

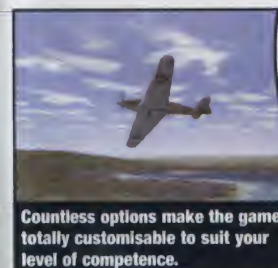
Although there are 20 planes to fly, it's sometimes tricky to distinguish one flight model from another unless you have the realism levels pushed up.



Once the screen starts filling up with aircraft, you can expect the frame rate to suffer.



All the cockpits have been faithfully recreated down to the last detail.



Countless options make the game totally customisable to suit your level of competence.



The terrain looks great from up here, but as with just about every other flight sim, once you start to lose altitude it all goes a bit blocky.



Missions include a search and destroy sortie, and escorting 'chums' on a bombing raid.



There's a massive manual that comes with the game, full of fascinating insights into the life of a WWII pilot, a detailed account of how the war progressed, and tips on tactics and formations etc.

EVERYBODY'S DOIN' IT!

There are approximately eight rival WWII flight sims all due for release in the next couple of months. *EAW* is one of the first to appear, along with Microsoft's *Combat Flight Simulator* (reviewed on page 118). Here's how, on paper, *EAW* compares with the competition

★ **Confirmed Kill** (Eldos Interactive) has suffered from long delays. An online version is believed to be near completion, followed by a standalone boxed version. It's based on the potentially smart *Flying Nightmares 2* engine.

★ **Fighter Duel 2.0** (Ocean/Infogrames) is the long-awaited sequel to the rather mediocre *Fighter Duel* (PCZ #34, 65%). Reports indicate that you can fly more than 40 different aircraft over a "topographically perfect" 3D terrain, and the emphasis is now as much on mission-based play as it is on dogfighting.

★ **Fighter Squadron: Screaming Demons Over Europe** (Activision) looks likely to slip into 1999 and will feature ten flyable aircraft, three different campaigns and a mission editor.

★ **WWII Fighters**, aka *Jane's Fighter Legends: Europe 1944* (Electronic Arts), is due any time now and sports the nicest visuals yet witnessed in a WWII flight sim. Developed by the same people who gave us MicroProse's *Top Gun: Fire At Will*, you can fly up to seven different aircraft.

And although there's no dynamic campaign, there are more than 70 missions to complete and you can fly for either side during 1944's Battle of the Bulge. The developers intend it to be highly customisable to individual machine specs, and there's a Quick Mission Creator feature as well as 50 minutes of FMV.

★ **Luftwaffe Commander** (Mindscape/SSI) comes from the designers of *Sabre Ace* (PCZ #63, 34%) and features ten flyable aircraft (58 overall) over 50 missions, plus a 'custom combat' option. There are 20 scenarios for up to ten players, as well as co-operative missions and two (simple and complex) flight models. It looks pretty lush, and 3D support looks like being mandatory.

★ **Warbirds 3D v.201/Dawn Of Aces** (Interactive Magic) looks like being the best sim in the popular online series, with 3D hardware support and 11 planes to take control of.

★ **Wings Of Destiny**, aka *Nations* (Psygnosis), certainly looks the part. It's being developed by ex-DID personnel, so potentially it could be pretty smart, but only time will tell.

Available
Now

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2000

PC FORMAT

88%

".....it has that magic ingredient called
gameplay, and it has it in spades."

90%

PCZONE
CLASS

"a compulsory purchase."

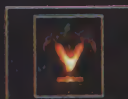
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OUT NOW!

**PCZONE
CLASSIC**

90%

"a compulsory purchase."

"Virus is back and it's in cracking form."



PCFORMAT

88%

"... it has that magic ingredient called gameplay, and it has it in spades."

"The game is a pleasure to delve into. There's so much to see, and so many ways to achieve goals...."

EDGE

"unique, playful, inventive, subtle...incredibly V2000 is all of these things and more".

PC REVIEW

"An imaginative, tough-as-nails update of an innovative game."

"It's got all the ingredients to become a cult game."

PC GAMER

"...there's so much to appreciate."

**FRONTIERS
GAME OF THE MONTH**





AXIS & ALLIES

★ £39.99 • Hasbro • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb RAM
SUPPORTS Internet play (28.8 modem required) **WE SAY** No problems there



The usual problem with converting mainstream board games to PC is that either developers try too hard to crowbar in new features that make the original game unrecognisable or they lose the plot altogether and go for the multimedia approach.

Basically, the aim of A&A is to win WWII. Five players – any mix of human or computer-controlled – take charge of one or more of the five major powers: Britain, Russia, Germany, Japan and the USA. Each territory yields different production points, which in this case can be converted to upgrading existing

units or buying whatever you can afford from a range of ten different units. Some of these are better in attack than in defence, and others can move in more than one territory. Combat is resolved by rolls of the dice: if you win you take over the region.

Hard-core strategy fans will no doubt see A&A as too simplistic. It's the kind of game you can play with your dad, with PC illiterates, and with lovers of the board game original over the Internet or otherwise.

The developers have thankfully stayed true to the original game. In fact in many ways it's better. The fact that it took at least six hours to play a decent game meant that 'saving' it was a case of slipping it under the bed in the hope that little Emily didn't find it and choke to death on one of the counters. Now Emily can choke on something else.

Richie Shoemaker

PCZ VERDICT

80%



101: 101st AIRBORNE IN NORMANDY

★ £44.99 • Empire • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133
Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS**
DirectX-compatible sound card **WE SAY**
P200 recommended

D-Day buffs will know that Private Ryan (as in the film) was a member of the 101st 'Screaming Eagles' Airborne Division, so a game about paratroopers in Normandy on D-Day is well-timed.

Unlike *Saving Private Ryan*, 101 is no real-time spectacular filled with blood and guts. It's strictly turn-based, although to create some uncertainty, each soldier moves in accordance with his own initiative level, which is based on individual RPG-style abilities such as intelligence and experience.

The graphics are slightly above pathetic, and the sound effects roughly the same level above naff, but chuck in some solid gameplay ideas and dozens of different soldier actions and the sum total is an absorbing squad-level wargame with plenty of options and obstacles.

You take command of a 18 paratroopers – pick them, equip them, and then fight them through a series of missions. The selection process is hard work but realistic, although you can easily lose half of them or more in the drop, so make sure you always have double the necessary equipment.

Each mission takes place on a 6x7 grid of maps, and the game does a good job of simulating the uncertainty and confusion of D-Day itself. However, the horrible uniformity of the bi-directional hedges can really get at you after a while, as can the painfully slow movement animations.

If you've got the patience, 101 is a very rewarding game, although the chronic slowness and occasional line-of-sight problems do hold it back from getting a much higher score.

Andrew Wright

PCZ VERDICT

73%



BUGGY

★ £39.99 • Gremlin • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P90
Memory 16Mb RAM **ALSO REQUIRES**
I3D card **WE SAY** Sounds about right



Buggy is a smart little driving game that puts

you in charge of a 'radio-controlled' buggy that bounces around any one of a number of groovy tracks. The further you get into the game, the groovier your choice of buggy can get as you stumble across hidden buggies of increasing power or versatility.

The tracks – from urban cityscapes to subterranean grottos – are littered with obstacles which can be avoided or jumped. Jumps propel the buggies high into the air, enabling them to perform stunts as well as overtake their foes. But in order to pick up bonuses, you also need to negotiate the slalom gates littered around the track: short sequences deliver simple bonuses, such as speed bursts, while more complicated sequences deliver extra abilities and surprises. The more stunts you perform, the more tracks you find to explore, so that as you get to grips with the game you can go back and discover hidden stretches on tracks you've already done.

As well as the standard Championship and single-player modes, Buggy offers split-screen racing with up to four competitors either in the same room or over a LAN. Time Attack mode has you competing against the clock.

As racing games go – and there's a fair amount of shite out there – Buggy is a neat little contender. Your light, little buggies handle well and obey most of the laws of physics, and the added interest provided by the funky power-ups gives the game an extra bit of life. The scenery's pretty cool too. Buggy is no *Carnageddon* (PCZ #65.95%), but as an imaginative and fun little racer it more than holds its own.

Paul Hales

PCZ VERDICT

80%



Shake...

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Rollercoaster



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Never seen the roads this clear around Marble Arch before. Perhaps there's been a bomb scare.



Should've called it James Bond Racing instead.

NEWMAN HAAS RACING

★ £TBC • Psygnosis • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 **Memory** 16 Mb RAM
ALSO REQUIRES 3Dfx card **WE SAY** That should be okay

Ever heard of Newman Haas? Neither had I. In fact, like the shambling knucklehead I am, I had blithely assumed it was the name of one person. It isn't. It's two: Carl Haas and Paul Newman, no less, who formed a successful IndyCar racing team in 1983 and haven't looked back since. Unless there's something interesting happening behind them, of course, in which case they probably gawp like a pair of startled, slack-jawed hicks watching their backward uncle 'getting jiggy' with a mule.

That's Newman/Haas the team. *Newman Haas* the game is based on Psygnosis' successful *Formula 1* titles, but with a heavy dose of pinches and tweaks

to make it, you know, betterer. When it first appeared on the PC, *Formula 1* made our eyes pop out. Sadly, *Newman Haas* just looks... well, pretty average, really. Certainly not bad, but you're not going to be short of breath once the game proper starts up.

Having said that, it's a solid enough play, with several more tracks than is strictly necessary, and a sturdy, slick engine keeping the whole shebang 'on the road', if you can stomach such a sickeningly appropriate metaphor. The opponents are challenging, the controls are pleasingly responsive, and it'll keep racing nutrags satiated... but... well, we just weren't quite blown away by it, that's all.

Another case of 'close but no Lewinsky' for Psygnosis this month, then. And another game that feels more like a PlayStation release than a PC game. Can't be a coincidence, that.

Charlie Brooker



Dethkarz is fast, furious and a lot of fun.



As with the game, the control method is annoying.

DETHKARZ

★ £29.99 • Ocean • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P200
Memory 16Mb RAM (without 3D acceleration); P166 16Mb RAM
SUPPORTS 3D card and 32Mb RAM highly recommended **WE SAY**

With a name that sounds like one of those Scandinavian death metal bands that eat their own faeces and burn down churches, *Dethkarz* is – to great relief – a futuristic racing game that eschews all attempts at realism in favour of fast and furious gameplay. It won't set the PC games chart on fire, neither will it be looked upon as the most original game in years. Rather, *Dethkarz* is one of those rare games that takes you out of reality for a couple of hours and shows you a damn good time. Don't expect to be playing it forever in the hope of discovering hidden intricacies; the satisfaction you get from *Dethkarz* follows the law of diminishing returns to the letter.

Fitted as standard are a second-rate techno soundtrack, 12 tracks and cars, nine power-ups and two weapons. Although there's no split-screen option, the full range of multiplayer support is included. And yes, a 3D card is highly recommended – with one, *Dethkarz* is instantly likeable.

The tracks all look good, and the sense of speed is as intense as it is in any other title in the genre. This is added to by some well-designed levels that cause your vehicle to plummet over the edge with frightening regularity.

Some of the power-ups are excellent, but if it had a split-screen option and a few more tracks and weapons, *Dethkarz* would have found itself highly recommended.

If you enjoyed *Pod* (PCZ #49,90%), you'll like *Deathkarz* just as much, if only for its sense of speed, although it's hard to imagine this game achieving the same level of support as *Pod*.

Richie Shoemaker

DIE BY THE SWORD: LIMB FROM LIMB

★ £19.99 • Interplay • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P100
Memory 16MB RAM **SUPPORTS** Direct3D and 3Dfx (requires full version of *Die By The Sword*, obviously) **WE SAY** P133, 32Mb RAM and Direct3D-compatible card recommended

Die By The Sword (PCZ #64, 75%) is the second most annoying game ever made. The first is *Abe's Oddysee* (PCZ #60,81%), but for different reasons.

DBTS is a fairly decent action game in the mould of *Deathtrap Dungeon* (PCZ #65,70%), whereby you hack and slash your way through a series of levels in search of your kidnapped girlfriend. It goes without saying that the idea is to exact bloody revenge on all those who you come across.

In parts the game is hilariously funny – lop the leg off an orc, then pick it up and beat the next one to death with it. Unfortunately, the control method is so hideously cumbersome as to make the game almost unplayable unless you devote days to practicing its fine art. To recap: the mouse is used to wield your sword – in theory a fine idea, in practice a nightmare. There's a simpler arcade mode, but in all honesty it isn't simple enough.

Anyway, *Limb From Limb* is an expansion pack for *DBTS* that adds a new quest and gives you a choice of new characters to control. New weapons, arenas and multiplayer modes are also included. *Limb From Limb* doesn't so much add to the gameplay as double it. Graphically, the original game was never that great in the first place. The sound, however, remains highly enjoyable, adding more over-the-top Python-esque voice-overs. Sadly, the exact same control method remains in place, which means that if you hated the game the first time around, you'll still hate it.

Richie Shoemaker

PCZ VERDICT

72%

PCZ VERDICT

78%

PCZ VERDICT

71%





That's a nice dressing gown he's wearing. The bald twat.



"I wonder why... he's the greatest dancer... that I've ever seen..."



Insert generic 'cheap cigarette lighter' gag here.

← ODT

★ £TBC • Psygnosis • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb, Windows 95, 3D accelerator card **WE SAY** Sounds about right

ODT. *ODT?* There's been widespread speculation about what the title '*ODT*' actually stands for. Well, not really. The only people who give a toss are Psygnosis' advertising copywriters, who've been making us all laugh till our stomachs bleed with their hilarious interpretations of this particular acronym (add a photo of an overweight woman in lingerie with the caption: 'Old dodgy tart'. Absolutely hilarious). The truth of the matter is that it stands for the word 'oddy', which is precisely what the game itself is.

Essentially a hybrid of non-stop murderthons like

Loaded and dainty platform epics such as *Tomb Raider* (PCZ #45,95%), with a sprinkling of *Gauntlet* and some spangly 3D-card fireworks to smooth over the corners, *ODT* should be a diverting blast. Instead your attention is swayed more by the inclusion of some of the flat-out crappiest names in a computer game ever (one of the player-characters is called Maxx Havok; the ship he arrived on is the Nautiflyus) than by the fairly pedestrian in-game action proper.

This kind of thing really isn't worth pursuing on the PC any more. *ODT* is also available for the PlayStation, where it'll blend in nicely with all the other fair-to-middling arcade action plodders. On a system capable of pouring your brain full of the likes of *Half-Life* (reviewed on page 88) or *WarGasm* (reviewed on page 82), however, it's got more in common with a presentable yet not especially interesting guest at a high-society dinner party: nothing offensive, yet liable to be ignored.

Damned with faint praise? Yup, suppose it is. Next, please.

Charlie Brooker

PCZVERDICT

69%



"I can see Charlie from here. Charlie Sheen, that is."

MISSING IN ACTION

★ £29.99 • GT Interactive • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** Direct3D **WE SAY** P133, 32Mb RAM and 3D accelerator or it gets a bit choppy

According to the manual, 2500 personnel were listed as missing in action after the US government decided to pull out of the war in Vietnam. In fact, this foreword to the manual is pretty grim reading. The box art even hints at a game that might just contain some hidden agenda. But as soon as you start playing you are flung into an out-and-out action game where morality is left in the packaging, and the simple idea is to blast everything in sight and try not to kill too many innocent Vietnamese in the process.

All 26 missions are preceded by well-produced FMV, and usually require you to either destroy tanks, VC, or villages that harbour VC operatives. Occasionally you end up with escort duty or humping around and picking up ground troops, but the meat of the game is air-to-ground combat. And unfortunately it's all a bit unambitious, even if it is mildly engaging.

Basing the game in Vietnam seems to have limited the style of mission you undertake. Although no sense of realism is intended, a whole lot could have been added. For instance, if after being shot down you could run around with a pistol, avoiding VC patrols while waiting for Gene Hackman and Danny Glover to come and rescue you. Even if you could get involved in some small-scale ground war it would at least be something different. While you are given a good field of view from just behind your 'slick', it all feels too small in scale, though with four helicopters to pilot there's just enough to keep you interested.

Richie Shoemaker

PCZVERDICT

68%



Mortal Kombat 4: giving gamers a bad reputation.

MORTAL KOMBAT 4

★ £TBC • Virgin • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P75 Memory 16Mb RAM **WE SAY** That's fair enough

It must be games like this that give us spotty gamers a bad reputation. But the kids love 'em. It's not really the way the blood splatters as each hefty blow lands on your adversaries, nor is it the gut-wrenching sounds they emit as you pummel them to submission or oblivion. It's possibly the way that, if you hit enough buttons quick enough, you can come up with a move that has your opponent on his knees and at your mercy.

Mortal Kombat is, of course, a beat 'em up. Nuff said. You can change personalities, locations or modes of battle – arcade, team, tournament or endurance – but it all adds up to the same thing: duff up your opponent and move on to the next one. There's no subtlety here. But it's a console favourite. In that strange world, it's up against *Tekken 2*, which is shorter on blood and smarter in execution (I'm told). On the PC, we surely expect a bit more. With *MK4* you don't get it. Its straight old fisticuffs all the way, with the odd fancy move or weapon thrown in, and plenty of gruesome grunting and splattering blood.

You spend a few hours configuring your gamepad (don't even try it with a keyboard), and a few more mastering complicated button combinations, then you can get the mates round and batter them to a pixellated pulp.

Unless you're a potential playground bully who reckons that it may be therapeutic and slightly less anti-social to batter 3D opponents rather than the fat kid with the doughnuts and glasses, you should avoid this crap. Challenge your mates to a game of on-screen soccer or something instead.

Paul Hales

PCZVERDICT

45%

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CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

Do you like your friends a reasonable amount but not enough to buy them a full-price game for Christmas? Well don't take a hammer to your piggy bank until you've cast your eyes over these wallet-friendly titles

WORDS Chris Anderson and Richie Shoemaker



Baldies: the game equivalent of 'straight to video'.

BALDIES

£4.99 • Sold Out • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor 486DX2/66 Memory 8Mb RAM

Baldies was due nearly two years ago but failed to see the light of day due to so-called publishing problems. The real reason that it never came out is actually down to the fact that it wasn't really up to scratch. Harsh words perhaps, but when you consider that its first release is to a pocket-money budget label, it would be difficult to come to any other conclusion.

Basically it's a real-time strategy game like most other real-time strategy games, except that instead of building tanks and ships, you produce squads of slapheads in dungarees. Workers breed to create more baldies, scientists work to produce weapons, while builders and soldiers do exactly what their respective titles suggest.

The good thing about the game is that once you've got the hang of the way it plays, there's actually quite a lot to do, and the new weapons that come into play later on are quite fun. The problem is that apart from the dated graphics, your follically-challenged underlings seem to have a mind of their own, and end up wandering around and getting into all sorts of trouble. If you tend to give up on games quite easily, our advice would be to give Baldies a miss. If, on the other hand, you're a forgiving soul who sticks with things to the end, then give it a try.

PCZVERDICT

61%



Probably the best strategy game ever made.

X-COM 3: APOCALYPSE

£12.99 • Powerplus • Out now

TECH SPECS

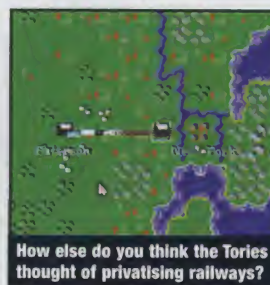
MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor 486DX4/10 Memory 16Mb RAM

Apparently there are still people out there who haven't played any of the X-COM games. Well, if you're one of them, here's how they work (the rest of you can nod off at this point): you are in charge of X-COM, an elite unit established to combat a fierce, nay, positively demonic alien threat. To this end you must build an HQ, recruit soldiers, employ scientists to conduct research (they develop bigger and better weapons and all kinds of useful gadgets), and then take the battle to the aliens as they make their numerous unwelcome flights over the biggest cities in the world. You are then taken to the ground combat section (this can be turn-based or real-time, depending on your preference) where you can use all the stuff you researched in the resource management section to overcome the aliens.

This is easily the best game in the X-COM series to date, and represents what could be the last game in the saga to use traditional X-COM tactical combat (X-COM: Interceptor has space combat; X-COM Alliance will have first-person combat). And it's brilliant. So buy it.

PCZVERDICT

90%



How else do you think the Tories thought of privatising railways?

RAILROAD TYCOON

£4.99 • Sold Out • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor 386 Memory 4Mb RAM

If the saying 'the old ones are always the best' rings true, then Railroad Tycoon must surely be one of the greatest strategy games ever made. In actual fact it is; or rather was. Created by Sid 'Civilization' Meier, Railroad originally appeared back in 1993. The amazing thing about it was

that it was a game for trainspotter that actually managed to break the mould by appealing to everyone. What it offered was the chance to build an empire-spanning rail network to the envy of your competitors, and then eliminate them by buying shares in their respective companies. This Deluxe Edition (don't read too much into that) enables you to build 32 different types of trains all over the Americas, Europe and Africa, and run all sorts of goods all over the place. The original game didn't even sport VGA graphics, so you can thank this Deluxe version for at least providing something halfway decent on the eye. Anyway, dire graphics aside, if you missed Railroad Tycoon the first time around you have two choices to catch up: buy this for a fiver, or buy the sequel. If you can't decide, you'd best turn to the review on page 93.

PCZVERDICT

67%



One of the best two-player games you'll ever find.

WORMS

£4.99 • Sold Out • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor 386DX Memory 4Mb RAM

The gameplay behind Worms has been around in one form or another for almost 20 years. If you remember that tank game where you had to enter the angle and distance for a shot across a hill to destroy the enemy, you'll already be aware that Worms is simply an updated version.

Using your four-worm team, the aim is to destroy the enemy worms in the shortest possible time. Each player has a formidable range of weapons at their fingertips, ranging from bazookas to air strikes and exploding sheep. Some weapons have unlimited ammo, while others can only be collected from falling crates that appear periodically. Each game can be modified by increasing the health of each player's worms or adding more weapons, and there are a wide variety of terrain types to play through. It's one of the best multiplayer games out there, although the single-player game is weak in comparison, playing more like a practice mode for the two-player game.

In terms of gameplay there isn't a lot of difference between the two Worms games, but graphically they're worlds apart. We'd recommend waiting until Worms 2 appears on budget, which shouldn't be too long. If you do decide to buy Worms though, you won't be disappointed.

PCZVERDICT

65%

NOT actua quick enough.



are you actua quick enough ?



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Beautiful and atmospheric, but lacking any real depth (ho-hum).

SUB CULTURE

★ £9.99 • Classique • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133
Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** 3Dfx,
Direct3D, PowerVR, MMX

You can sum up *Sub Culture* in three words: miniature underwater *Elite*. "Why 'miniature'?" you ask. Well, the people who make up the populous of the two warring sides in the game are very small indeed – thumbnail size in fact – so nuclear Armageddon in their world would fail to register as much as a whale's fart in ours.

In the unfolding drama you play a mercenary submariner working for either or both of the two sides. Life in this small-enclosed universe is harsh. Eels, rogue traders and discarded tin cans all make up the various obstacles to overcome in making enough credits to upgrade your ship and eventually get through a series of rather limited and boring missions.

And that's the other reason *Sub Culture* is diminutive compared with other trading/combat games. Apart from cooing at the fabulous graphics and atmospheric sound, there isn't much else to do in the game. Upgrading options, trading and opportunities for exploration are all limited. With a little extra effort, so much more could have been added: more ships, more terrain and better thought-out missions. As the saying goes: great graphics (and they are great, by the way) do not a great game make.

PCZ VERDICT 70%



Doctors at large in *Theme Hospital*.

THEME HOSPITAL

★ £14.99 • EA Classics • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor 486DX2/66 Memory 16Mb RAM

High on humour, high on fun and low on the tedium normally associated with this sort of simulation, *Theme Hospital* is a refreshing take on a genre that often takes itself too seriously. As the title suggests, the game puts you in charge of your own hospital. You won't be able to do much at first (there isn't really much you can do with an empty hospital), but once you've taken on some staff and kitted out your hospital with the basic necessities, you'll be ready to open your doors to the poorly folk in your area.

After your patients have been diagnosed by a GP, they're sent to the pharmacy, various clinics or operating theatre for treatment – if you've got the technology, that is, otherwise you'd better get on with some research. As you complete the levels you're rewarded with the discovery of new equipment and an interesting variety of new diseases – psychiatric patients believing they're Elvis (decked out in rhinestone-encrusted white suits, of course), and horrendous afflictions such as bloaty head, invisibility and hairyitis. You can even watch the cures being carried out, complete with sound effects (watching the 'slicer' lopping off a 'slack tongue' makes you wince).

But there's more to it than just curing patients. The overall aim is to be the most successful hospital in the area (there are three others competing), and naturally the more people you cure the more money you earn. But patients leave and go home if there's nowhere for them to sit, if they have to wait too long to see a GP or psychiatrist, if the corridors are rat-infested or no one's cleared up the mess of a vomiting epidemic. It also pays to hire the most competent staff and keep them happy with salary increases and a staff room. Then there's the maintenance of your equipment, decision making as to whether you can cope with emergencies, balancing your budget, and on and on.

Theme Hospital is an essential purchase for anyone with a sense of humour and even a vague interest in resource management or strategy games. Our own Production Editor, Thea, has confessed to losing extremely large portions of her spare time to heavy-duty *Theme Park* sessions, and that in itself is quite enough reason for you to consider this a must-have for your collection.

PCZ VERDICT 90%



F1GP2: the racing purist's number one.

FORMULA 1 GRAND PRIX 2

★ £12.99 • Powerplus • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor 486DX2 Memory 8Mb RAM

PCZONE RECOMMENDED This is the granddaddy of all Formula 1 racing games, the crème de la crème of all things related to chequered flags, oily tracks and large amounts of money spent on sponsorships. At least it was until *F1 Racing Simulation* (reviewed on budget on next page) and then its sequel, *Monaco Grand Prix* (PCZ #69, 92%), came along. However, *F1GP2* is still a fantastic racing game. It's very realistic, it's very fast, and it has great attention to detail (bits fly off the cars when they collide, a feature that caused the game to be delayed for about a year). Graphically it doesn't compare to either of Ubi Soft's efforts, even in high resolution, but if you've got a lower-spec machine *F1GP2* is probably the game for you.

PCZ VERDICT

80%



Cannon Fodder: they don't make 'em like this anymore. Pity.

CANNON FODDER 2

★ £4.99 • Sold Out • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor 386SX Memory 2Mb RAM

PCZONE RECOMMENDED This brings back fond memories to the *ZONE* team, representing as it does a bygone era when solid gameplay meant more than a dazzling array of graphical effects supplied by the latest 3D cards. The premise behind the game is simple: take control of a group of little men and send them round a variety of landscapes looking for other little men to blow up or shoot in the face. Each member of your team that survives a level is available for the next mission, thus making progress a little easier. Modern-day equivalents to *Cannon Fodder* are probably the hundred or so real-time strategy games around, but not one of them can match *Cannon Fodder 2*'s ingenious level design and delightful attention to detail. And you don't need a Pentium II to run it, either. Top budget tip of the month: go out and buy *Cannon Fodder 2* and *WarCraft* for a tenner. Now how cool is that?

PCZ VERDICT 80%



F1 Simracing: one of the best racing games on the PC.

F1 RACING SIMULATION

★ £12.99 • Classique • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P120 Memory 16Mb RAM

PCZONE CLASSIC This was Ubi Soft's first serious venture into the Formula 1 racing genre, and what an impact they made. When it appeared, it was the most realistic game of this type available on any format, and has now been superseded only by its own sequel, *Monaco Grand Prix*. Graphically, *F1 Racing Simulation* urinates on all the other games in the genre from a very considerable height. And if you don't like the sound of an ultra-realistic racing sim (ie one that's probably very difficult), *F1RS* comes with a host of options which can be tweaked all over the shop to make the experience much easier for novices. It's not quite as cheap as some of the games featured here, but if you want quality racing on budget it has no equals.

PCZVERDICT

90%



Warcraft: battles on budget.

WARCRAFT

★ £4.99 • Sold Out • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor 386 Memory 4Mb RAM (those were the days, eh?)

PCZONE RECOMMENDED Five quid. A fiver. Four pounds and ninety nine pence for one of the best real-time strategy games around. They're having a laugh, surely. They're pulling our leg and taking the Michael. Except they're not, of course. Originally slashed to £9.99 on budget, those crazy people at Sold Out have now lifted another fiver off the asking price, giving you a chance to find out on the cheap why *Warcraft* received critical acclaim on its release.

This is real-time strategy with wizards, elves, orcs and other Tolkien-inspired bods in an epic quest which basically involves beating the shit out of each other at every opportunity. Build up your colonies, mine for resources, and take on the enemy when you think your troops are suitably tooled up. Yes, we know this sounds spookily familiar. There are a lot of real-time strategy games out there, but *Warcraft* is one of the better ones, so don't dismiss it out of hand. The only slight downer is that *Total Annihilation* and *Red Alert* fans may find some of the missions a little tedious and long-winded, but generally speaking there's a lot of fun to be had here. And it is, after all, only a fiver. 'Nuff said.

PCZVERDICT

80%



It's fast and fun. Simulation fans will hate it.

RED LINE RACER

★ £12.99 • Classique • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 32Mb RAM (3D-accelerator card mandatory) **SUPPORTS** 3Dfx, Direct3D

If it wasn't for the recent explosion in 3D graphics cards, *Red Line Racer* would surely never have seen the light of day. Compared to any ancient bike racing game you care to remember, it doesn't offer anything particularly new apart from fast and flashy graphics. It doesn't pretend to be a simulation, but rather a fast and furious racer aimed squarely at those bored with the mound of four-wheeled titles adorning high street shelves.

The aim, as per usual, is to race around the various tracks in the fastest possible time. Beating your opponents gains access to 'secret' tracks, and with a little bit of jiggery-pokery (ie cheat codes) you can change your bike into any number of bizarre high-speed steeds, ranging from a scooter to the sub from *Sub Culture*. The best part of the game is the way in which riders are thrown from their bikes after speeding into hedges, but don't expect any realistic twisting of bone or patches of blood appearing on the tarmac; what you get is cheesy but satisfying screams and flailing bodies rather like – but not as good as – *Motocross Madness*.

The lack of any championship modes certainly makes the game seem a bit light, but if that's what takes your fancy *Red Line Racer* is as light as they come.

PCZVERDICT

70%



Oddworld: The old-school platform game for the '90s.



Meet Elum and you can run faster and jump further (if you can get him away from the honey).

ODDWorld: ABE'S ODDYSEE

★ £12.99 • Replay • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb RAM

Occasionally we get a few letters complaining about the level of profanity in the magazine. Most of the letters are from people who buy one issue, read it, complain and then go and buy a different magazine next month. We want to say one just thing to them: buy *Oddworld* and you'll soon discover why swearing is so necessary. *Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee* is the most frustrating game ever created. F**king frustrating, in fact, a real mutha of a game. Capiche?

As Abe, your aim is to save the mudokon race from servitude in the meat farms of the evil Glukkon. If you had some sort of weaponry it would be easy, but alas Abe has no offensive capabilities whatsoever, merely a limited vocabulary, a repertoire of rectal coughs and the ability to possess sligs – who handily carry machine guns.

Like all good platform games there are chasms to leap and levers to pull, but what makes *Oddworld* so instantly appealing is the wonderful atmosphere that permeates the entire game. The creatures are truly alien, the good guys are full of character, and the bad guys... well, they're almost frightening. The graphics are fairly low-res, but the animation, effects and cut-scenes are spot on. If you buy this game you'll either love it or hate it, but either way you'll be swearing like a trooper. Welcome to our world.

PCZVERDICT

77%

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THE DRAGON SLAYER ASGHAN

"..... shaping up to be the game that Deathtrap Dungeon and Die By The Sword originally promised to be."

PC FORMAT

• Award winning 3D engine



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Asghan™ ©1998 Société Silmarils

“*Theme Hospital* is high on humour, high on fun, and low on the tedium normally associated with this kind of simulation”



Why do we British like to paint targets on our planes?



It's sometimes very difficult to tell how high off the ground you are.

FLYING CORPS

★ £12.99 • Replay • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P90 Memory 16Mb RAM



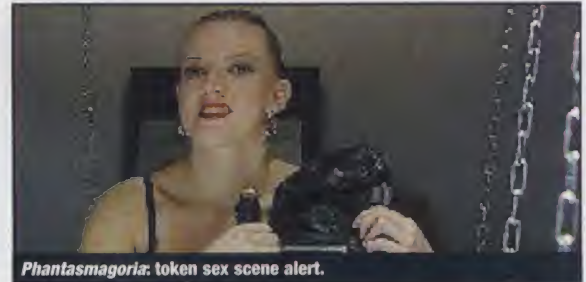
First off, this isn't the Gold Edition that was released back in January, so don't expect any 3Dfx support, the extra campaign, missions or planes. This is the exact same version reviewed in March '97 and the same WWI flight sim that garnered a jolly spiffing 92%. Looking at it now it's difficult to get excited about the graphics. Although the maps are apparently historically accurate, there's a distinct lack of ground detail, especially as all the best missions require you to blow the shit out of scrambling foot soldiers who've just managed to avoid the latest barrage of mustard gas – poor blighters.

Offering the usual mix of instant-action missions and campaigns, *Flying Corps* enables you access to four planes from the era, fighting for either the Allies or the Germans. The planes handle well, and the missions are varied and difficult enough to keep you playing until WWI becomes fashionable again.

You can't really go wrong with WWI flight sims as long as you follow one simple rule: don't buy *Red Baron II*. And with all these modern-day flight sims about, it's always refreshing to go back to the days when the most technologically advanced weapons platform was little more than a few thousand matchsticks covered by a scant dressing of canvas.

PCZ VERDICT

85%



Phantasmagoria: token sex scene alert.

PHANTASMAGORIA 2

★ £9.99 • Sierra Originals • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor 486DX Memory 16Mb RAM

After the entire world hurled abuse at *Phantasmagoria 1* (PCZ #33, 50%) – with the exception of America, obviously – the team behind the sequel almost begrudgingly endeavoured to make sure that *Phantasmagoria 2* was slightly better than the first game. Where the first effort was simply a paltry excuse to film some really gory horror scenes and stick them on several 'multimedia CD-ROMs' in the hope that people would mistake them for an adventure game, the sequel actually has a tale of sorts to tell. Said tale centres round a bloke who gets involved in weird goings on at work and thinks he's going mad. He *is* going mad, as you'll find out later in the game (oops, sorry, we've spoilt it for you. Oh well).

Highlights of the game include token sex scenes, people losing various limbs in all manner of comedic, horror-filled mix-ups, and switching off your PC when you've decided you've had enough. Oh, alright then, there are people out there who like watching five hours of FMV and occasionally solving a few puzzles. If you're one of them, we take it all back.

Phantasmagoria 2 is actually a veritable feast of audio-visual entertainment, and not a pathetic excuse for an adventure game, as some people would have you believe. Good, we seem to have proved beyond any reasonable doubt that you *can* please all the people all the time (*You reckon?* – Ed).

PCZ VERDICT

50%



A lizard. On platforms. Fancy that.

GEX 3D

★ £12.99 • Classique • Out now

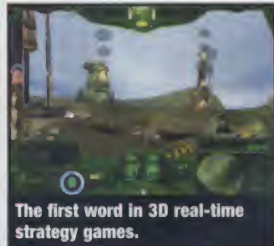
TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 32Mb RAM

It's a platform game. With a lizard. He jumps about, leaps, whips his tale, collects power-ups and then jumps about some more. It's not entirely dissimilar to Nintendo's *Super Mario 64* (one of the best platform games of all time, in case you didn't know), but it's nowhere near as inventive or stupidly addictive as Nintendo's classic. In its favour, it *does* have a true 3D environment, it's extremely colourful, and the graphics are 'cute', so the kids will love it. And let's face it, kids are probably exactly who this product is aimed at in the first place, so in that respect it does its job pretty well.

PCZ VERDICT

70%



The first word in 3D real-time strategy games.

UPRISING

★ £9.99 • Classique • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** 3Dfx, Direct3D, PowerVR

Beating *Battlezone* (PCZ #62, 81%) into second place in the 'let's be the first to do a *Quake*/C&C hybrid' race, *Uprising* was the first of a new breed of strategy game. Controlling a wraith tank, the aim is to capture enemy citadels and build factories around them, so when you got your tank got into trouble you could teleport in more tanks, infantry or aircraft to help you out.

By beating *Battlezone* to be the first on the shelves, *Uprising* failed to be superior, and the reason is simple: the balance of play is screwed up. The gameplay should be relatively simple to master, but thanks to a bewildering array of keyboard shortcuts, it takes far too long to get anywhere after the first couple of missions. *Battlezone* also has better missions, better graphics and a more believable storyline. Unfortunately though, *Battlezone* still costs the same as it did when it first came out.

Uprising was the first real-time strategy game to go 3D. Apart from the fact that it's far too difficult after the first few levels, it's quite an appealing mixture of C&C-style resource management and 3D action, with the emphasis on the action. Get to grips with its inadequacies though, and you're in for a challenging time. (Just for the record, *Urban Assault* [PCZ #67, 85%] came third and is the best game of the three.)

PCZ VERDICT

73%

PCZ SUPERTEST DRIVING GAMES



Racing games have come a long way on the PC since *Lotus Esprit Turbo*. **Jeremy Wells** rounds up six of the best currently available and sorts out the Lambourghinis from the Ladas

Picture the scene: it's lunch hour, you've got around 40 minutes left after you've spent nearly quarter of an hour queuing for a sandwich. You need to de-stress, feel the wind in your hair and sense the smell of high-octane fuel in your nostrils – and kick some ass! Well, sit down, open the window, pour that half-empty bottle of Tipp-Ex thinners over your keyboard and boot up

one of these little beauties. You've only got 34 minutes left, and then it's back to work. Gentlemen, start your engines!

The games we're looking at here have been selected because they give you an immediate sense of gratification and an opportunity to race against the machine and your mates (which is why Codemasters' *Colin McRae Rally* hasn't been included, as you only ever race against the clock). You

don't have to spend hours tweaking your car's suspension and gear ratios to be able to compete, all you need is some nifty thumb movement, skill and the will to win – at all costs.

TOCA is arguably seated in the 'sim' camp, but that's not to say it hasn't got something to offer the man with a little time on his hands. Although they supposedly feature realistic handling and in some cases there's limited scope



Unlike *Colin McRae Rally*, you actually get to race against other cars.

SCREAMER RALLY

★ £14.99 • Virgin Interactive Entertainment • PCZ #57

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P90 Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** 3Dfx and Direct3D **WE SAY** More RAM and a 3D accelerator card is a good idea

No driving game round-up would be complete without one of the enormously popular *Screamer* titles. The last to grace our screens, and arguably the best,

was the highly acclaimed *Screamer Rally*, released just over a year ago. Packed with every feature you'd expect to find in a driving game, *Screamer Rally* has

more built-in longevity than Cliff Richard's sperm.

As well as the three levels of difficulty and one-off arcade and championship modes, you can participate in time trials against ghost cars of your own best times, and there's also full-on network support and a split-screen mode. Once you've won on

HOW THE GAMES ARE RATED

We've taken six of the best racing games released in the last 12 months or so and put them through their paces. Listed below is a brief rundown of the criteria we used to test each game

NUMBER OF CARS, AND HANDLING

So many cars, so little time. We're not just considering how they look here, but also if they 'feel' right and whether different cars handle differently.

NUMBER AND RANGE OF TRACKS

Here we not only consider the number of tracks on offer and how they look, but also how varied and fun they are to actually race around.

MULTIPLAYER OPTIONS Okay, not everybody has access to a network or a fast Net connection. But hey, some of these babies just beg to be played over a lightning LAN. We thoroughly tested each game over our office network (purely in the name of research, you understand).

ORIGINALITY AND FUN FACTOR By their very nature, driving games are often very similar: you choose a car, select a track and off you go. So what have the developers done to make theirs different?



With loads of cars on screen it's prone to 'jerk-o-vision', even on a P166 with 32Mb RAM and a 3D card.

TOCA: TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

★ £29.99 • Codemasters • Reviewed PCZ #59

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P100 Memory 16Mb RAM Supports 3Dfx, PowerVR and Direct3D **WE SAY** A P166 with 32Mb RAM and a 3D accelerator card are needed to avoid frame rate fluctuations

Like *Screamer Rally*, *TOCA* is getting a bit long in the tooth, and the fact that *TOCA 2* is just around the corner means that if touring car racing is your thing, you'll probably be better off with the sequel, which promises to be better in every way. However, in its own right the original *TOCA* isn't half bad.

Seated firmly in the sim camp, despite its age the hardware requirements are still pretty steep, and you'll find it frustrating at first if you're used

to cars that handle like they're stuck to the road with Evo-Stick. There's a good range of cars and circuits, and some nice 'arcade-style' bonuses, but the fact that you can't access all the tracks until you've 'unlocked' them is odd considering the 'sim' status that the game propagates.

THE CARS

There are loads of accurately modelled cars to choose from and they look the mutt's nuts. They also handle like they're

supposed to, which means you have to drive them properly: no screaming up to a bend and slamming on the anchors as you make the turn; you've got to brake in a straight line, turn in and gently accelerate out of bends or you'll end up entangled in the barriers. It's tricky at first, but immensely gratifying once you get the hang of it.

THE TRACKS

There are nine accurately modelled circuits, including Donington Park, Brands Hatch and Silverstone. Only two are available at the start of the game, and you have to 'unlock' the rest by building up your points. This is

a bit naff considering this is supposed to be a simulation, and you'll no doubt want to practise driving around the different circuits, but it does keep you at it – for a while, at least.

MULTIPLAYER

Network games can get a little frustrating, especially if you don't know the courses like the back of your hand. In practice it's hard to find six people who are all at roughly the same level, which means that one guy will inevitably zoom off into the lead while the others try and content themselves with staying on the track. If you're *TOCA* mad, then you'll love it. Otherwise...

ORIGINALITY AND FUN FACTOR

TOCA is a funny beast. It's very much a sim, but it's got lots of features you'd expect to find in an 'arcade-style' racing game. It's almost as if the developers couldn't make up their minds what it was supposed to be, or thought at the last minute that the sim tag would put too many people off. As an out and out sim it's undoubtedly impressive, but the inclusion of an easier arcade mode, where the cars are more forgiving and a more sensible approach to how the game progresses, would undoubtedly give it a broader appeal.

PCZ VERDICT

Cars	8
Tracks	7
Multiplayer	6
Fun factor	7

80 A heavyweight sim that won't appeal to everybody

for setting up your car, the other five games tested here – *NFSIII*, *Motorhead*, *Ultimate Race Pro* and *Screamer Rally* – are pretty much deemed 'arcade' racers. And then there's *Carmageddon II*, not exactly a 'traditional' racing game, but hey, it's got cars in it, and the basic premise is to hare around a circuit and beat your opponents to the finishing line, and that's good enough for us. Right, let the race begin...

“One of the courses looks like something out of *Super Mario Kart*”

all the courses and bonus courses, found the bonus cars and won the championship at the hardest level, the tracks become mirrored and you can race them all again.

It may be starting to look a little dated, but *Screamer Rally* still stands up well against the other games reviewed here, so if you haven't got kick-ass kit you can still enjoy it without the frame rate suffering too much.

THE CARS

There are eight cars, plus bonus ones; they have made-up names but you should recognise them. You can alter the set-up of your car(s) and save them, though this doesn't seem to have much of an effect. The detail isn't up to the standard of the other games on test here, but the cars handle well and quite differently on different surfaces, though their appearance isn't affected by collisions.

THE TRACKS

There are six traditional courses in all: China, Canada, Italy, Arizona, Sweden and, er, Wales, as well as a stadium-based course that looks like something out of *Super Mario Kart*. Once you've won everything, the tracks are mirrored and you can race them all again. Track detail is pretty high considering the game's age, but it's not going to make you go: “Ooh! Look at that!”

MULTIPLAYER

As well as a six-player network option, there's a rather nice split-

screen mode that enables you and a chum to race mano y mano. It's obviously not as good as playing over a network, and the frame rate sometimes suffers, but don't knock it.

ORIGINALITY AND FUN FACTOR

It's fun, if a little old-looking, but a bargain at this price. Multiplayer network play is a real laugh, and because the tracks are quite tight and the cars slide all over the place it's pretty easy to catch up with the pack even if you spin off. If you've got a PC that was

entry-level a year ago, then *Screamer Rally* really should feature in your collection.

PCZ VERDICT

Cars	7
Tracks	7
Multiplayer	7
Fun factor	7

82 A classic racing game that's aged well, and at a bargain price

← **ULTIM@TE RACE PRO**

★ £19.99 • MicroProse • Reviewed PCZ #62

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 **Memory** 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** 3Dfx, PowerVR and Direct3D **WE SAY** More RAM's not a bad idea, especially if you have a PowerVR card

Unlike *TOCA*, *Ultim@te Race Pro* is very much an arcade-style racing game. The cars handle like they're on glass, with concrete tyres, and there's no way you're going to end up on the podium without employing your brake, handbrake and some gentle nudging.

Developed by Kalisto, the game was used by VideoLogic to show off what their PowerVR technology could do, and as a result it looks rather gorgeous.

THE CARS

Again there are plenty to choose from, and they all handle pretty much the same way – like they're on ice. At first it's hard to stay on the track, but once you've learnt to overcome the rather poor

steering by using power slides you're in seventh heaven. The cars aren't what you'd call over-detailed, and they don't fall to pieces when you hit things, but the moving reflection in the rear window is a nice touch, as are the headlights when it gets dark.

THE TRACKS

To say this is one of the best-looking driving games wouldn't be a lie, mainly thanks to the detail in the tracks and the roadside furniture. There are misty waterfalls, shadowy, tree-lined avenues and sun drenched desertscapes – sometimes you just want to stop the car, get out and have a picnic. And there's a good mixture of tracks: some you



No split-screen mode means you're missing out if you haven't got a fast connection or access to a LAN.

can fly round at full pelt, while others require precision braking and expert use of the handbrake.

MULTIPLAYER

When it first appeared, network *Ultim@te* managed to usurp even *Quake* for a while. If you ignore the sometimes erratic frame rate, the 'killer' arena with four ramps aimed at the centre is a hoot – and the traditional races aren't bad either.

ORIGINALITY AND FUN FACTOR

Ultim@te Race Pro isn't exactly original, it's just another good-looking arcade-style racing game. But everything is done rather well. It looks good, it's very easy to get into and the multiplayer mode is a lot of fun. Because it lacks any real depth, it's not a game you'd play for hours at a time, but it's definitely worthwhile for a quick fix of speed.

PCZ VERDICT

Cars	7
Tracks	8
Multiplayer	8
Fun factor	9

86 Fast and fun, but that's all

MOTORHEAD

★ £34.99 • Gremlin Interactive • Reviewed PCZ #63

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P100 **Memory** 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** 3Dfx, Direct3D, MMX **WE SAY** More RAM, a higher processor and a 3D card please

“The futuristic bent may not be to everyone's liking, but in terms of sheer enjoyment this is not a game to be missed”



The cars are 'damage proof', so you can employ ruthless tactics.

Motorhead arrived in the office a short while after we'd reviewed *Ultim@te Race Pro*, and was soon adopted as the office racing game of choice. At first glance it's not that different from *Ultim@te*, though just a few minutes' play confirms that it's much quicker, and that there's more scope for long-term appeal thanks to a well thought out and implemented league system that really forces the learning curve as you struggle to gain enough points to win promotion to the next league.

Those of you without dedicated 3D hardware will be pleased to hear that *Motorhead* looks far from knackered when running in software, though with 3D hardware support it looks quite glorious.

THE CARS

Futuristic and plentiful, the cars all handle quite differently and have different top speeds and varying degrees of acceleration and grip. Which car you choose depends largely on the track you're racing on, and it's worth taking at least a few seconds to compare each car's specifications. The fact that they are 'damage-proof' opens the

door to some rather ruthless tactics, and means that manoeuvring your car about the track is not limited to blocking your opponents, as you can also barge them off the track. Unfortunately, the CPU-controlled cars are no crash test dummies, and given half a chance they do the same to you.

THE TRACKS

Detailed and well thought out, the tracks are visually impressive. If you're playing the league game, you soon notice that the circuits get more difficult as you progress, with increasingly tighter bends and narrower roads. There are long straights, tight turns and some pretty cool *WipEout*-like jumps that have you rising out of your seat as you follow your car's trajectory through the air.

MULTIPLAYER

Playing solo is a lot of fun, but playing over a network is an experience not to be missed. Because the cars are indestructible, all notion of a non-contact race goes out of the window, and there's plenty of argy-bargy. The fact that if you turn your car over means it's all

over is: a) good, in that it's realistic; b) bad, especially if you end up on your roof early on. You can ask a kindly Samaritan to knock into you in the hope that the impact will right your car, but don't expect much charity in the heat of a network battle.

ORIGINALITY AND FUN FACTOR

Overall, *Motorhead* succeeds in being a very accessible, playable and quick racing game without any pretensions. There are no real surprises, but in terms of sheer enjoyment and features it's way up the grid. The way the single-player game is structured, it's as good for a 20-minute blast as it is for an evening session.

PCZ VERDICT

Cars	8
Tracks	7
Multiplayer	7
Fun factor	8

88 Ridiculously fast and thoroughly enjoyable

NEED FOR SPEED III

★ £39.99 • Electronic Arts • Reviewed PCZ #69

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 **Memory** 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** 3Dfx, PowerVR and all major 3D accelerator cards through DirectX **WE SAY** Play it on a fast machine with a 3D card and more RAM and it's like being there

One of the biggest things in *NFSIII*'s favour is the fact that as well as playing it as a standard racing game, you can also play cops and robbers – as the pursuer or the pursued. There's also traffic to contend with, numerous different race modes, and some of the nicest graphics ever seen in a racing game. The detail of the cars and the tracks is simply amazing, and if you've got the hardware it really is an absolute visual treat.

THE CARS

There are loads of different muscle cars to choose from – Lamborghinis to Ferraris, Jaguars to Mercedes – as well as a souped-up Corvette cop car, and Electronic Arts promise that even more will become available from their website over the coming months.

Handling varies from crap to neat, depending on your choice of motor, and the opponent AI varies from passive to downright aggressive, depending on what level you're competing at. The police are absolute bastards, and stop at nothing to bring you and your fellow road racers to a halt. Treat them with the contempt they deserve, but keep your eyes peeled for the spiked strips they lay across the road.

THE TRACKS

There are eight courses in all, which can be mirrored to bring the total to a rather impressive 16 (sort of). The level of detail is high, and the oncoming and non-racing traffic makes for some pretty exciting races, though you can opt to turn such distractions off if you want to concentrate on learning the courses, bringing down your lap times and hunting out the short cuts. Visually it really is the most beautiful racing game you're likely to see for quite a while – as long as you've got the hardware, that is.

MULTIPLAYER

This is where *NFSIII* really comes into its own. You not only get to race against each other, traffic and the police, you can also opt to have a good old-fashioned game of cops and robbers and try to ram each other off the road. Even if you haven't got access to a network, the split-screen mode should be enough to keep you and a chum busy burning rubber for more than a while.

ORIGINALITY AND FUN FACTOR

When it comes to features, *NFSIII* just can't be beaten. The numerous different race options, along with the sheer

number of different cars, tracks, driving conditions and the race 'n' chase-style gameplay make it stand out head and shoulders above other racing games.

And it doesn't really matter which mode you go for – it's instantly accessible in novice mode and a real challenge in the pro one. If you're bored of just racing round a circuit, it's like a breath of fresh air. Go buy it. It's the most fun you can have on four wheels without knocking down any pedestrians.

PCZ VERDICT

Cars	9
Tracks	9
Multiplayer	9
Fun factor	9

91 Beautiful to look at and lots of fun. Marry me, *NFSIII*



Remember to always carry your driving licence...

The scenery's great, if you can find time to look at it.



A life on the open road...



The cops will stop at nothing to get you. Bastards!



With a 3D card the graphics are absolutely stunning.



There are loads of cars to choose from.

When you play *Carma II* for the first time you spend at least a couple of hours just smashing up the cars and laughing – it's that kind of game



Have some of that and get out of my way, you muthas!



Bored of smashing up cars? Try some peds instead.

As in the original, the cars buckle, bend and fall apart with unrivalled splendour.

CARMAGEDDON II

★ £39.99 • SCI • PCZ #69

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 16Mb RAM
SUPPORTS 3Dfx, PowerVR and all major 3D accelerator cards
through DirectX **WE SAY** P200, 3D card and more memory

The sequel to last year's game of the year is better in every way thanks to a new game engine and more focused gameplay. Although racing is in many ways the last thing on the agenda, few driving games can boast such an immediate sense of fun, coupled with unrivalled accessibility and visual splendour.

THE CARS

As in the original, the cars buckle, bend and fall apart with unrivalled attention to detail, except that this time it looks and feels even better. When you first play *Carmageddon*

II you spend at least a couple of hours just smashing up the cars and laughing – it's that sort of game. There are loads of different machines to choose from, each with their own strengths and weaknesses, plus some rather cool 'comedy' cars. Unfortunately, the cars don't handle as well as one would hope. The original game suffered from similar symptoms, and it still feels very much as though the turning circle of each car just isn't tight enough. That said, there are so many cars to choose from that you're bound to find one you like.

SUPERTEST WINNER

THE TRACKS

This time around, the tracks are better constructed and on the whole well-conceived. Unlike before, they're grouped together, and as well as winning each race by completing the set number of laps the quickest, killing all the peds or destroying all the other vehicles, there are some excellent and highly imaginative 'special' stages that you must complete before you progress to the next level. The addition of a map and directional pointers helps immeasurably, and overall the tweaks that developers Stainless

have added make it even more playable than before.

MULTIPLAYER

Multiplayer *Carmageddon* was fun for a limited time, but ultimately proved frustrating because the tracks were just too big, making it difficult for players to find each other. Multiplayer *Carma II* is much better thanks to the addition of smaller, dedicated multiplayer levels, which are ideal for both one-on-one duels and multiplayer smash 'em ups.

ORIGINALITY AND FUN FACTOR

In many ways, *Carmageddon II* is like a breath of fresh air for racing game fans. The main thrust may not be on racing, but it does focus on how well you control your car

in various, often ludicrous situations over varied and challenging terrain, and that makes a nice change. It looks great, it's immense fun to play, and although racing purists may find it a tad too OTT, few will be able to resist its laugh-out-loud charm. **PCZ**

PCZ VERDICT

Cars	9
Tracks	8
Multiplayer	8
Fun factor	10

93 Bigger and better than ever

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WHEELY GOOD

A look at the best steering wheel and pedals around, including the latest with force feedback technology

★ BEHIND THE WHEEL Warren Christmas

Few PC peripherals are as cool and yet uncool as steering wheels. Cool because they're genuinely a lot of fun to use and, in most cases, can help to improve your lap times considerably. But uncool because if you're caught using one you'll look like either a five-year-old playing with a crappy plastic toy or, if you've spent loads of money, a sad obsessive. Either way you probably aren't gonna impress the 'chicks'.

Still, we'll leave you to wrestle with the social implications. Here we've taken a look at a cross-section of what's currently available on the market, from cheapies with a street

price of less than £50, through to models costing – gulp – over £150.

Three of the models here have built-in motors and offer tactile response, or 'force feedback' as it's generally referred to: hit a kerb or another car and you'll feel a sudden impact; suffer a blow-out and the wheel will judder violently; veer off on to grass and you should feel the control slipping. You get the idea.

HOLD ON TIGHT

As anyone who's played *Sega Rally Championship* or its like in the arcades will testify, when these tactile effects are done well, they can be excellent. On the PC, however, we're very much at the mercy of game designers. With some titles, such as *TOCA Touring Car*, the effects are very basic, with just

simple kerb-hit effects and suchlike. With others, they're much more advanced. In *Ultimate Race Pro*, for example, you can literally feel the car

“When these tactile effects are done well, they can be excellent”

sliding slightly out of control as you power-slide around corners.

Keep in mind too that there are still games coming out which don't support force feedback at all (including, sadly, racing game of the moment *Grand Prix Legends*). With so many devices now coming on to the market, however, that situation should change next year.

Incidentally, there are two competing standards in the field: Microsoft's Force Feedback technology, and Immersion's I-Force 2.0 (which is being used now and in future products by CH Products, Thrustmaster and Logitech, among others). Both use DirectX APIs and extensions, so if a game is force feedback-compatible it usually supports both types of device (for a list of titles visit www.microsoft.com/products/hardware/sidewinder/ and www.force-feedback.com/). Anyway, the engines have been started. Let's get on with it shall we?



ACT LABS RS

★ \$69.99 (approx £42) • Act Labs • (001) 604 278 3650 • www.actlab.com/

The Act Labs RS and the \$140 (approx £85) force feedback version, the Force RS, aren't widely available in the UK yet but should be within a matter of weeks. And on the evidence of this test they'll be worth looking out for. The excellent heavily padded steering wheel has the smoothest action of all of the wheels on test here. At the rear are F1-style gear shift paddles (which are a little hard to reach), with a further seven independent buttons on the front plus a four-way d-pad in the centre. The stable pedal unit is heavy, large and works well. The major failing with the RS is the rudimentary clamping system which doesn't accommodate thick desks or tables. Pity.

PCZ VERDICT

83%



LMP DESTINY FORCE FEEDBACK WHEEL

★ £129.99 • LMP • 01992 503133 • www.leda.co.uk/

Forgetting that few PCs are used on low tables, LMP use the same upright design here as they do for their Gamester console-based steering wheels. The result, when mounted on a typically high desk, is akin to driving a bus. Not good. On the front of the plastic, non-coated, 'D'-shaped wheel are six independent buttons and a d-pad, while at the rear there's a further two buttons plus a bizarre two-way gear paddle on one side. The plastic pedals are okay-ish but, again, very lightweight. The bundled game – EA's *Andretti Racing* (PCZ #60, 73%) – demonstrates the wheel's I-Force technology, but on the evidence of this test it's really not that great. It's cheaper than other force feedback wheels, but we suggest you steer well clear of this (arf arf!).

PCZ VERDICT

58%



**BEST
BUY****CH PRODUCTS EXL500 RACING SET**

★ £79.95 • CH Products • 01494 442266 •

www.chproducts.com/

Get this for Christmas and you'll need to employ your finest "Ooh, that's lovely, thank you" acting skills. It looks crap. The main unit attaches to a desk with suckers or clamps but, just to make sure, some velcro strips are provided too. It has just four buttons, with the first two repeated in the form of a gear stick on the right – no rear-mounted paddles here. The floor unit, meanwhile, has simple toe pedals with a very short action, although the brake is at least 'heavier' than the accelerator. Despite appearances, the padded wheel feels quite nice to use, but ultimately this really doesn't feel like £80 worth of kit.

PCZVERDICT**73%****DIGITAL EDGE F1 SIM**

★ £159.99 • Zye Technology • 01293 538666 •

www.digitaledge.co.uk/

This F1 Sim has been around for years in various guises and remains an office favourite at *PC ZONE*. The leather-covered wheel is made of solid metal, with a centre-pivoted gear shift paddle at the rear and two extra buttons on the front; rather superfluous LED indicators show which button you're pressing. The long steering column screws into a two-part wooden base which is designed to sit under your monitor (the heavier the better). The floor unit (again all metal) is unwieldy, but has well-sprung pedals and works well if you wear shoes. Serious race simulation fan? Then this is still the one to go for.

PCZVERDICT**90%****DIGITAL EDGE F1 SIM COMPACT**

★ £79.99 • Zye Technology • 01293 538666 •

www.digitaledge.co.uk/

Baby brother to the F1 Sim, this model has a plastic-covered U-shaped wheel. The under-monitor base is also plastic. Nevertheless, the important bits (the wheel itself, the gear paddle and the steering column) are all of metal construction, which is impressive for a relatively cheap set-up. Not so impressive is the lightweight floor unit with its simple, short-action toe pedals. Still, you get what you pay for, and at half the price of the F1 Sim the Compact definitely represents very good value for money. Pay a tenner extra and you get a fully boxed copy of Psygnosis' *Formula One '97* (PCZ #62, 92%) thrown in.

PCZVERDICT**86%****MICROSOFT SIDEWINDER FORCE FEEDBACK WHEEL**

★ £149.99 • Microsoft • 0345 002000 •

www.microsoft.com/

At first glance, this really doesn't look like it should cost £150. Use it, however, and you'll be impressed – the heavy-duty motor inside produces some excellent and very strong force feedback effects. Two of Microsoft's own games – *CART Precision Racing* (PCZ #61, 72%) and *Monster Truck Madness 2* (PCZ #65, 70%) – are bundled to demonstrate the technology. The wheel, which attaches to a desk with a good single clamp system, has a nice rubber coating and features six independent buttons on the front plus two buttons (not paddles) at the rear, all of which are within easy reach. The floor unit isn't great, but definitely benefits from a very large base. Simple, but good overall.

PCZVERDICT**86%****SAITEK R4 FORCE WHEEL**★ £169.99 • Saitek • 01454 855050 • www.saitek.com/

The R4 uses Microsoft's Force Feedback technology, and to good effect. With its space-age styling it looks a little bizarre, but locks to a desk (with a choice of three driving angles) with a smart single clamp system. The nicely rubber-coated wheel – which is almost as square as David Courthard's chin – has just two buttons, but there are paddles at the rear, and an independent gear stick to the right. We found the floor unit to be a tad unstable, but you can alter the resistance of the pedals, which is a nice touch. Impressive all round, but rather expensive, especially as you don't get any bundled games – just a few demos.

PCZVERDICT**84%****THRUSTMASTER FORMULA SPRINT**

★ £54.99 • Thrustmaster • 01276 609955 •

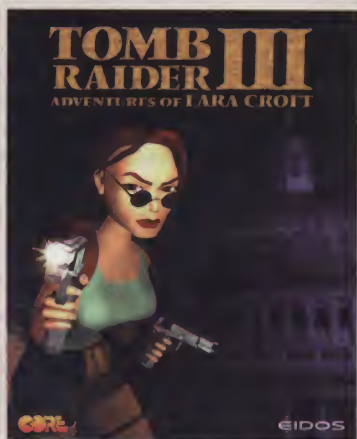
www.thrustmaster.com/

Thrustmaster used to be known for their high-end flight sim equipment. Now they're more into affordable, mass-market stuff. Like this. The Formula Sprint looks cheap, but then it *is* cheap. The thin, rubber-coated wheel has four buttons on the front, with two nicely sprung gear-change paddles at the rear. The slim main unit attaches firmly to a desk with two quick-release clamps. Sadly, the floor unit is pretty crap. The tiny pedals are too close together and have a very short throw action, and the unit moves too easily underfoot. Pretty crap overall, then? If you're an adult, maybe, but as a cheap present for a kid it's not that bad.

PCZVERDICT**77%**

VIRGIN FESTIVE BRIBE SHOCKER!

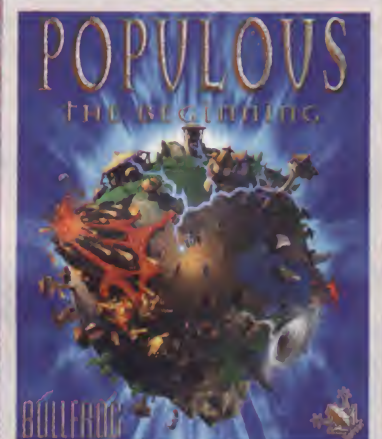
SPEND £50 AND WE'LL SLIP
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Fifa 99 PC CD-Rom



Populous: The Beginning PC CD-Rom



Carmageddon 2 PC CD-Rom



MEGASTORES

EDDY FRANCIS

IT'S YOUR SHOUT!

EMAIL Alternatively, email them to us at letters.pczone@dennis.co.uk with 'Feedback' in the subject line.

LIE DETECTOR

REVIEWED Issue 69, November
SCORE 10%

What we thought

PCZONE
PANTS

"If you're unfortunate enough to end up playing this on your own, *Lie Detector* is a worthless experience of the highest order. If you're daft enough to load it up when you've got friends round, it's just embarrassing. Avoid it like the plague. *Lie Detector* is a waste of time and money."

What you think

★ "I was expecting a shiny new copy of *Ground Zero* when my girlfriend bought this for me for my birthday (*Yeah, yeah – Ed*). We 'played' it for about half an hour and my girlfriend loved every minute. Personally it's the worst thing I've ever had on my hard drive apart from a virus. Now my girlfriend has started making up new questions to challenge me about my past girlfriends and whether I still fancy her. My life has become a nightmare. Out of desperation I scratched the CD, but my girlfriend went back to the shop and exchanged it. Someone help me. Please."

*Anon (aka Eddy Francis,
aged 30, Middx)*

DEER HUNTER

REVIEWED Issue 68, October
SCORE 27%

What we thought

"The word 'game' is used in its loosest sense, as according to



Parenthood can be as frustrating in *Creatures* as it is in real life.



HardWare, just when you're getting started, it's all over (insert your own 'premature ejaculation' joke here).

the box it is actually an 'interactive hunting experience', one of a worryingly expanding series centering around perpetrating acts of violence against a variety of dumb beasts."

What you think

★ "I would like to make it clear that I am not a hunter myself, and would not consider hunting in real life. However, I have to say I think your writers are being a trifle unfair in their reviews of the various hunting games recently released by US publishers."

"Is it not a bit strange that your reviewers (quite rightly) rave about games based on running over pedestrians, shooting criminals, bombing Koreans or taking over the world with fascist armies, but go all bleeding-heart and politically correct when asked to review a game where you have to shoot stags?"

"It is my recollection that *Duck Hunt* was one of the all-time classic early arcade games; and I didn't notice anyone complaining about how you could make birds and rabbits explode in *Unreal*. "I'm not in favour of hunting, I just want your reviewers to rate games on their merits."

Adam Steiner

HARD WAR

REVIEWED Issue 67, September
SCORE 85%

What we thought

PCZONE
RECOMMENDED

"Its plot is over within a matter of days, and once it's over the game's essentially over. *Elite* stretched its plot strands out over several months at the very minimum, and this is a model that *HardWar* really should have paid attention to."

What you think

★ "Compared to *Elite*, the world of *HardWar* is far too constricted; choosing a career before you even start certainly limits the options for open-ended play. The storyline too isn't a patch on *The Darkening's*, and the trading element is far too clumsy.

"Don't get me wrong, I did enjoy playing *HardWar* for the atmosphere alone, but after waiting almost three years for a decent space trading and combat game, I have to say I'm more than a little disappointed. *HardWar* has been in development for years, and for a game that's over within a couple of weeks, you can't help wonder if games these days are designed to depreciate."

Glitterboy

CREATURES 2

REVIEWED Issue 68, October
SCORE 90%

What we thought

PCZONE
CLASSIC

"Creatures 2
is here and I'm
terrified. Why?
Because I can't help loving my
creations. Whether they're
thick or clever, independent or
docile, or even annoying, I care
for them."

What you think

★ “*Creatures 2* is amazing, though I really want to create a psycho norm to kill all the other cute ones. But I conducted an experiment: I hatched a load of both male and female norms and left my PC running overnight to see what would happen. Every one had died by 2am. Sad!”

Marc Drinkwater

★ "To be quite frank, it's a bit poor, especially after what we were promised would be delivered. Getting the norns to do anything is still the chore it has always been, and the little bastards are as irritating as ever."

"We were promised this all-new intelligence system, norms with proper life systems, and other execrable shit. I've been playing for a couple of days now and have, by some incredible



Dr Jon reckons *Need For Speed II: Special Edition* is better than *NFSIII*.

fluke, managed to get a male norm past pre-adulthood. Now everything is fine and dandy, I can tell him what to do and he'll do it. Before your norms get this advanced they are a complete pain in the arse."

Kimbo

NEED FOR SPEED III: HOT PURSUIT

REVIEWED Issue 69, November
SCORE 91%

What we thought

PCZONE CLASSIC "NFSIII succeeds in bringing the fun factor back to driving games – just as *Carmageddon* does, albeit in a different way – and therefore comes highly recommended."

What you think

★ "Basically, Electronic Arts have taken an excellent game (*NFSII: Special Edition*), tarted it up with some unusable graphics and created a new, mediocre game. There aren't really eight new tracks at all; the first third of the four track 'environments' are repeated – somewhat transparently – with minor adjustments such as snow on trees to con you. The cop option, although interesting, is far too easy to beat, and the cars all handle like bags of old spuds. It's now almost impossible to roll

fast enough with most of the graphical detail turned down. Do yourselves a big favour: get *NFSII:SE* on budget and experience a much better game, with a blistering frame rate and eight different tracks."

Dr Jon

DUNE 2000

REVIEWED Issue 70, December
SCORE 62%

What we thought

"The only evidence that this game is new is a few graphical effects like coloured lighting and smoke. Even with these enhancements – and certainly next to *Total Annihilation* – *Dune 2000* looks a year out of date."

What you think

★ "I expect everyone will slate it, as it offers nothing new. I've found it thoroughly enjoyable and have played it pretty solidly for two days since I bought it. I don't see what else this kind of genre can now offer. From here on in, everything is gonna be a variation on a theme. If you played the original and want an updated version, it won't disappoint."

Gaoler

★ "Jesus, the graphics are awful. I can't believe they've done this – just copied *Red Alert* and changed the colours for the worse. I've never played *Dune 2*, but *Red*

"Maybe it's time Westwood started taking leaves out of other people's books instead of letting people take leaves out of theirs"

FAR OUT & GONE

your car, and the infrequent pile-ups are much less dramatic than they ever were in either previous incarnations of *NFS*.

"I seriously doubt that the game is playable on a P166 with 16Mb and a 3Dfx card, as stated in the review. I've got more than the EA recommended spec, and a force-feedback wheel (which incidentally, enormously reduces frame rates) and it's just about

Alert was one of my all-time favourite games, and I expected more from Westwood than a cut-down version of a year-old game. Building foundations for all the base units is the most annoying feature I've seen in a game of this sort, and the maps are so dull I can stand it no longer. It's back to the shop for this one – unless someone wants to swap?"

By-Tor

UNREAL

REVIEWED Issue 65, July

SCORE 93%

What we thought

PCZONE CLASSIC "Okay, we'll say it again: no, it isn't better than *Quake II*. Deathmatch lets it down.

In single-player, however, it's perhaps the slickest, most engrossing piece of entertainment you'll encounter this year."

What you think

★ "Reading through past reader comments on *Unreal*, I am amazed at how people miss the point. First of all, first-person games have been at a standstill action-wise. Graphics and level design have improved, but AI and monster behaviour has been the same since *Doom*: they mass up and go straight for you, regardless of how much you shoot at them. In *Quake II* we saw them ducking. Wow. That must have been hard. Then, in *Unreal*, they actually run away, hide, duck, jump around and look for better angles. They even run around corridors to get you when you're unreachable from their current position. A lot of thought must have gone into such clever monster behaviour, and this is why I like *Unreal* more than *Quake II* (single-player). There's really no challenge in *Quake II*. In

Unreal you need to keep on your toes and concentrate to stay alive. Combine that with great graphics and sound effects, and it's way better than *Quake II* in single-player mode. In multiplayer mode though, it sucks."

Pål Vågsæther Karlсен

★ "I can't believe all the negative feedback on *Unreal* – this is to provide some sort of balance.

"Apart from looking a million dollars, there's some really excellent multiplayer action to be had. Admittedly Internet play is very laggy and a patch is long overdue (I managed to download a sneak preview when Epic accidentally left an internal beta copy of it on their public ftp site – it definitely improves things. I've deleted it now, of course).

"One criticism I've read is that the weapons aren't very good. I disagree: you have to learn the best weapons for each situation, and the alternate fire modes and trick shots are great fun. If you're looking for a *Quake II*-like BFG, look elsewhere; the weapons in *Unreal* require a bit more skill and practice to be mastered. I'm not bashing *Quake II* or *Quake*, I enjoy these too. But *Unreal* has a lot to offer regarding multiplayer gaming. It's also a much better single-player game than *Quake II*."

Catweazle



You seem to agree with us that single-player *Unreal* is the mutt's nuts.

"There's no real challenge in *Quake II*. In *Unreal* you need to keep on your toes and concentrate to stay alive"

PÅL VÅGSÆTHER KARLSEN

★ "Your round-up of *Dune 2000* as 'C&C Beige Alert' was cool. How about this one then: *Dune 2000* – it's like *Dune 2* but with added zeros."

James Pearce

★ "I loved *Dune 2*. I remember playing it till all hours back when it first came out. I've bought nearly every real-time strategy game since, but have to say that *Dune 2* remains the one I have fondest memories of.

"I was obviously looking forward to this remake, but somehow it just doesn't do the same thing for me any more. It's like being given the opportunity to go back and relive your adolescent years, only to find out that those raging hormones were actually more trouble than they were worth.

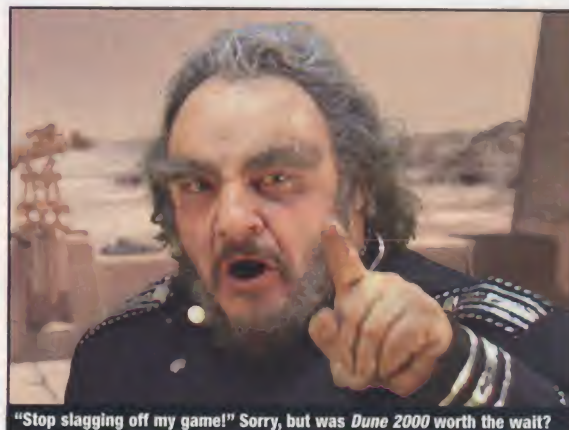
"The games industry has come a long way since 1993, and the real-time strategy game

along with it. It seems to me that Westwood have been given a little too much respect, and maybe it's time they started taking leaves out of other people's books (Cavedog, for example) rather than letting people take leaves out of theirs."

Far Out & Gone

★ "With games such as *Commandos: Behind Enemy Lines* around, with graphics that look very crisp and feature an engine which enables zooming, multiple cameras and superb AI, it makes me wonder if Westwood were just trying to make a quick buck."

Andy Nightingale



"Stop slagging off my game!" Sorry, but was *Dune 2000* worth the wait?

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It's time to end all wars.

We should run together, hold hands,
skip and gather flowers in the meadow.

Peace and love can swirl around us.

Let us dance to the rhythm in harmony.

Bollocks!

WARGASM
ANYTHING ELSE IS JUST FAKING IT

Stuck on a game? Don't know whether you're coming, going or standing still? Got a nasty rash on your bot? Girlfriend keep frightening you with the words 'settling down'? Don't worry, here comes the **PC ZONE** team to the rescue, laden with creams, pills and potions to sort you out

IN TRUBS THIS MONTH...

162 CHEATMASTER

If at first you don't succeed, cheat. Allow us to show you how it's done.

163 DEAR KEITH

Need a hand? Keith Pullin, our man with the plan, is here (just over there on the right, in fact) to help.

164 FINAL FANTASY VII

Part 2 of Pete Davison's guide to preventing the *Fantasy* becoming a nightmare.

170 CREATURES 2

Want to tame the beast? Toby Simpson and Mark Ashton offer some animal magic.

173 DEAR WAZZA

Need a hand with a technical query that's bugging you? Our tech-head Wazza is here to help.

176 HOW TO... SPOT A BARGAIN PC

In which (strange but absolutely true) Adam Phillips explains how to get your hands on a bargain PC.

184 WATCHDOG

Has someone pissed you off? Not satisfied with the service you've received? Allow **PC ZONE** to take up your case.

YOUR HOSTS



Warren Christmas



Keith Pullin



Pete Davison



Adam Phillips

CHEAT MASTER



Christmas is approaching, which means more free time for playing your favourite games. Here we come with a seasonal stockingful of cheats to give you an easier ride

★ CHEATMEISTER Keith Pullin



ON THE CD



We've got over 1200 games solutions squeezed onto this month's

CD. Check out the Editorial section of your CD-ROM browser to track them down.

NEED HELP?

If your problem's game-related, get organised and...

WRITE TO Dear Keith/CheatMaster, **PC ZONE**, Dennis Publishing, 19 Boissers Street, London W1P 7HJ

EMAIL letters.pczone@dennis.co.uk with 'Dear Keith' or 'CheatMaster' in the subject line.

RAINBOW SIX

Take 2 Interactive

Any game that kills you with a single measly bullet is asking to be sabotaged, so let's oblige. Bring up the chat window by pressing the apostrophe key (what do you mean, "What's an apostrophe?") and type in these Clancy-clouting codes:

Teamgod All team members are invulnerable

Avatargod Player god mode; only the player you control is invulnerable

Stumpy Stumpy mode: change characters' appearance - to say the least

Ciodhopper Enlarge characters' hands and feet

Bignoggin Big-head mode

Meganoggin Mega big-head mode

5fingerdiscount Replenish ammo

Nobralner Toggle AI on/off (you can't move through doors, stairs or ladders with this code in effect)

Debugkeys Debug enabled or disabled keys

Silentbutdeadly Move around after typing in this code or you'll miss the joke

Turnpunchkick 2D character mode - most peculiar

1-900 Perverted heavy breathing mode

Explore Turn the mission's victory conditions on/off. Perfect on Operation Yellow Knife because it lets you kill the terrorists and Anne Lang

WARBIRDS

Interactive Magic

Now here's something you don't see every day. If you fly off the southern section of the map, a lost world appears, replete with dinosaurs and natives. Try shooting the dinosaurs and strafing the natives for some cruel yet satisfying fun.

GET MEDIEVAL

Get medieval on this by typing the following codes during the game:

mpkfa God mode

mppos Global position

mpfps Frames per second

Or, if you're not much of a cheat, here are a few hints...

★ There are two signs which signal that you are about to enter a boss's lair. Firstly, the teleporter usually has a mosaic on the floor nearby, so if you see one make sure your health is up before you go through. Secondly, an on-screen message says: "Time to Get Medieval."

★ Don't stand in the corner of the screen when opening a chest. If a thief hits you and disappears out of view, you are unlikely to catch him. Ultimately, the best defence against thieves is a tightly grouped party.

★ Skeleton keys are timed power-ups, so don't pick them up until the path to the door is clear. They also open chests.

TIGER WOODS PRO TOUR '99

EA Sports

Here's a quick tip for you: switch from Pro Swing mode to three-click mode after you've teed off. It also means you have more control for your approach play, chipping and putting.

DESCENT FREESPACE: THE GREAT WAR

Interplay

Here's everything you need to know to see off this space action thriller...

During a mission, type 'freespacestandalone' to access all the movies in the tech room. A HUD message indicates that the cheat has been enabled. Also, during a mission type 'www.volition-inc.com'. This enables the following key combinations to be input while holding down the '-' key:

- Shift-C** Toggle availability of countermeasures for all ships
- K** Kill target
- Alt-Shift-K** 10% damage to target
- Shift-K** Destroy targeted subsystem
- Alt-K** Player takes 10% damage
- I** Invulnerability on/off
- Shift-I** Toggle invulnerability on target
- O** Toggle Descent-style physics
- W** Infinite weapons for player only
- Shift-W** Infinite weapons for all ships (including player)
- C** Message enemies
- G** Mark all primary goals complete
- Shift-G** Mark all secondary goals complete
- Alt-G** Mark all bonus goals complete
- 9** Scroll forward through secondary weapons
- Shift-9** Scroll backwards through secondary weapons
- O** Scroll forward through primary weapons
- Shift-O** Scroll backwards through primary weapons
- R** Issue re-arm request for target (or for player if no target is selected)

As well as those spanking tips, we have these handy pointers:

- ★ Use the Match Speed feature

to get yourself right on your opponent's tail.

- ★ Destroy your enemies' shields before finishing them off with missiles.

- ★ Proper shield management is important; increasing your shield recharge rate is always a good idea.

DEATHTRAP DUNGEON

Eidos Interactive

If *Deathtrap Dungeon* is the death of you, type these in during the game for a nudge in the right direction:

- Elvis** Unlimited health
- Mmmungo** Strength

- Billy Speed**
- Caffeine** 100 health
- Tools** All inventory
- Taxi** After entering this, hit 'P' to pause the game, and use '+' and '-' keys to select a new level

X-COM: INTERCEPTOR

MicroProse

We printed cheats for this a couple of issues back, but a cunning new one has come to our attention. Here you are – and don't forget to press Ctrl and 'E' before you type it in:

- Quickbase** Finish construction of all bases

ARES RISING

Imagine Studios

During a mission, hit 'C' then hold Shift and 'C' together. Type 'BIGASSSHIELDS' and hit Escape for invincibility. Alternatively, type 'IAMTHEMASTER' to win your core missions automatically.

NAM

GT Interactive

Charlie's got his tricks, we've got ours. During the game, type these codes for some well-earned leave.

- Nvagod** God mode
- Nvashowmap** Show the whole map

- Nvablood** All weapons
- Nvunlock** Toggle all locks
- Nvamatt** Radio man follows you
- Nvaclip** Allow clipping
- Nvalevelxy** Level skip, where 'x' equals a one-digit episode number, and 'y' a two-digit level number
- Nvarate** Change frame rate

NHL '99

EA Sports

If you're finding the latest *NHL* game a bit too slippery to handle, these indispensable codes are definitely for you.

- AWAYGOAL** Award away team a goal
- HOMEGOAL** Award home team a goal

DEAR KEITH

Stuck on a game? Luckily *Keith Pullin's* on hand to solve your problems. How nice of him

A BIT OF A PICKLE

Q My request is simple: how do I kill Meikor in *Deathtrap Dungeon*? He's the big ugly thing at the end of the game. I hope you can give me some pointers.

Bud Pickles, Roehampton

A Yes, I know who you mean. Use the Ankhs to get your health up to 300 or more, then stand on the middle walkway and start using fireballs or the flame lance on him. After a while he jumps on to the central platform. Use the teleporter to warp to this platform, and use Warding, Anti-Magic and Icy Cool spells for defence, and the Strength spell to make your Red Spirit Sword attacks more effective. But remember: when he rears back for an attack, stab him in the stomach. Also, watch out for his sharp teeth, and basically keep moving and slashing until he dies. It's not easy, but this method does work.

ROAD RAGE

Q *NASCAR 2* is a bit of a scream, but I was wondering if there's a way of moving up the field during a yellow flag? Please tell me there is or I'll punch my sister in the face.

Richard Wax, Great Yarmouth

A What? You're weird. I feel I should help you, really – somebody should. Okay, while in Racing mode (quick race or season race), when a 'yellow' comes out, slide up to the rear right bumper of the car in front and nudge him to the left to take his place. If you're fast and skilful you can move all the way up to the front using this cunning trick. Now leave your sister alone.

HELLO, I'M GOLF MAD

Q I've been playing *Tiger Woods Pro Tour '99*, but unfortunately I don't know how to putt – I seem to whack it past the hole every time. Do you have any advice that would help?

Gary Moon, St Andrews

A Hi. I've just had a quick word with Tiger and we reckon we can help. Firstly, downhill putts have a tendency to run miles past the hole. In fact, of all the golf games on the market, *Tiger Woods '99* is probably the worst offender when it comes to this particular problem. The best tactic is to land under the hole. That way you're left with an uphill putt which gives you a better chance of holing out. Don't be afraid to adjust the default club length for your approach shots, as improving that part of the game will also help your putting.

FOX IN A BOX

Q I was looking through a big box of games recently when, to my amazement, I found a copy of *Titus The Fox*. I've not played it in about four years and now I'm totally addicted again. Are there any cheats or tips you can give me to end my obsession with this amazing old game?

Alex X, email

A Kind of, but it's a bit technical. Start the game from the DOS command line using 'TITF TRN' for unlimited lives, or 'TITF COD' for the code list. If you can get them to work you just might be cured.

YOU'RE FADING OUT

Q After playing *Fade To Black* for a while I've become hopelessly stuck. My problem is a closed door near the start – every time I step near it, it slams shut. I'm probably missing something quite straightforward, so could you lend a helping hand to poor simple me?

Carol Dunn, Birmingham

A You really haven't got far at all, you big girl's blouse. Listen very carefully: there's a pressure pad in that room, and as soon as you stand on it the door opens, but only for approximately five seconds. If you can make it through within that time frame you'll be free. Some people...

FLYING BLIND

Q How can I hit the right structure with the laser-guided bombs in *EF2000*?

Baz Diamond, Dumfries

A The first thing to do is use the view target facility in the pre-flight briefing. That way you know what to look out for when approaching the target. Secondly, pick a distinctive geographical marker to help guide you. When you're about 5 to 7km from your target, activate TIALD then track and laser the target. With the TIALD MFD selected, drop your bomb at the appropriate point. *Boooooooooooooom!* Goodnight Vienna.

MAJOR FALL OUT

Q How do you kill The Master (evil dude at the end of the game) in *Fallout*? I've tried and tried but drones and stuff kill me. Just tell me what to do now, mon.

Pooky Finlay, Barbados

A Have you noticed the two drones standing beside him? Well, just run up to one of them, and when The Master attacks you with his Gatling laser he accidentally kills the drone. This triggers the other drone into attacking The Master, thus destroying him. Easy, or what?

STEP SIX

Q Do you have any tips or anything for *Rainbow Six*? The enemies are an incredible shot, and tend to pick me off with sniper-like accuracy even when I'm creeping around like an animal rights activist in a mink farm.

Luke White, Banbury

A Start slowly side-stepping as you approach doorways or corners. Also, if you see just a small part of the enemy, shoot anyway – a shot through the elbow takes out a bad guy almost as well as a shot to the chest. The best way of seeing around corners without getting capped is to go into third-person perspective. (There are some cheats over on the left if you're interested.)

FINAL FANTASY VII



EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW: PART 2

If you're having fantasies involving Tifa Lockheart and a chocobo, let *Pete Davison* counsel you back to the land of the sane

★ REVIEWED PCZ #66 SCORE 93%

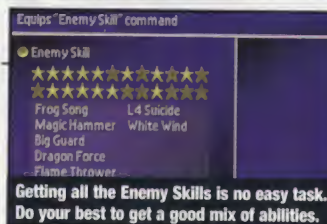
If you followed part one of our guide to *Final Fantasy VII* last issue, you'll know all about battle strategy, the secret characters and other little gems. This month we take a look at the sub-games, how to defeat Weapon and where to find all the Enemy Skills. We're not going to tell you how to beat the last boss, or how to cope with the untimely death of... someone, but these tips should help you find out some things that you perhaps wouldn't have thought to look for otherwise. Good luck, o spiky-headed one.

ENEMY SKILLS

Many people overlook the Enemy Skill materia, but it's a useful slot-saver. One measly materia can hold 24 spells, most of which are highly destructive and very cheap in terms of MP.

To obtain an Enemy Skill, an enemy must use the Skill on a character equipped with an Enemy Skill materia. This is easy for offensive skills, but to get defensive skills, further tactics are needed. Equip a Manipulate materia and manipulate the enemy with the ability. Then, on the manipulating character's next turn, a new menu pops up. Pick the skill you want and use it on the character with the Enemy Skill materia.

The very minimum you should get is Big Guard. This casts Barrier, Magic Barrier and Haste on all members of your party – very useful. Below is where to find them. Be careful – some places (such as Gaia's Cliff) can't be returned to later in the game, so try and get the Skills on your first visit.



Getting all the Enemy Skills is no easy task. Do your best to get a good mix of abilities.

SKILL NAME

Frog Song
L4 Suicide
Magic Hammer
White Wind
Big Guard
Angel Whisper
Dragon Force
Death Force
Flame Thrower
Laser
Matra Magic
Bad Breath
Beta
Aqua Lung
Trine
Magic Breath
Goblin Punch
Chocobuckle
L5 Death
Death Sentence
Roulette

ENEMY WHO HAS IT (AND LOCATION)

Touch Me (Gongaga area, Central continent)
Mu (near Chocobo Farm)
Razor Weed (Western continent)
Zemzelett (Juno area)
Beach Plug (beach near Gold Saucer)
Pollen Salitas (Northern crater)
Dark Dragon (Northern crater)
Adamantaimai (beach on Western continent)
Ark Dragon (Mythril Mine)
Death Claw (Corel Prison)
Sweeper Custom (outside Midgar)
Molbor (Gaia's Cliff)
Midgar Zolom (swamp near Chocobo Farm)
Jenova-LIFE (City of the Ancients)
Materia Keeper (Nibelheim Mountains)
Stilve (Frozen Mountain)
Goblin (north-east of map)
Cast L4 Suicide on a chocobo; it sometimes retaliates with this
Parasite (Northern crater)
GI (under Cosmo Canyon)
Death Dealer (Northern crater)

☞ Barret: heavy-handed and moonlighting from *The A Team*.

THE FOUR SUB-GAMES

There are four major sub-games which occur as integral parts of the plot. Once you've played them as part of the story, you can go back to Gold Saucer at any time and replay them. G-Bike is the first one you come across, upon your escape from Shinra HQ on disc one.

G-BIKE

You need to defend the truck – stay close to it. When an enemy bike appears, pull up alongside (you can speed up and slow down using the 'up' and 'down' keys) and give it a good whack with the sword while ramming it sideways – this is the quickest method to kill 'em.

Remember which characters you chose to be in your party, as you'll have a boss fight at the end of the road. Each character has an energy bar – if it drops to zero, they start the boss fight with one HP. However, as the boss always pre-emptly you, one HP basically means curtains, so avoid getting into that position.

SNOWBOARDING

Snowboarding is a short way into the second disc and it's fairly easy. When you play it as a 'plot element', all you have to do is get down the hill – ignore the balloons and stuff. Remember to use Pageup and Pagedown to slide-turn for sharper cornering.

If you replay this one at Gold Saucer, however, you need to be a little bit more skilful. You are marked on your accuracy, how many balloons you hit and how quickly you do the course. Different coloured balloons are worth different numbers of points: the red ones carry low points, blue ones are usually hidden behind obstacles, while green ones are practically impossible to get and so are worth loads of points.

Achieve a decent score and you'll be rated 'Good'. Replay the game to try a new course and keep going until you complete the 'Crazy' course. Finish this for prizes.

FORT CONDOR

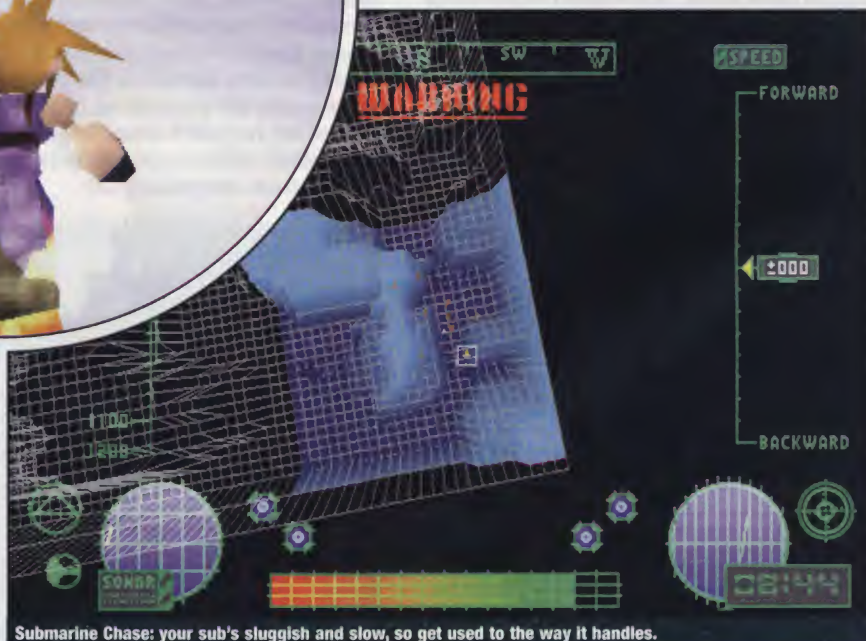
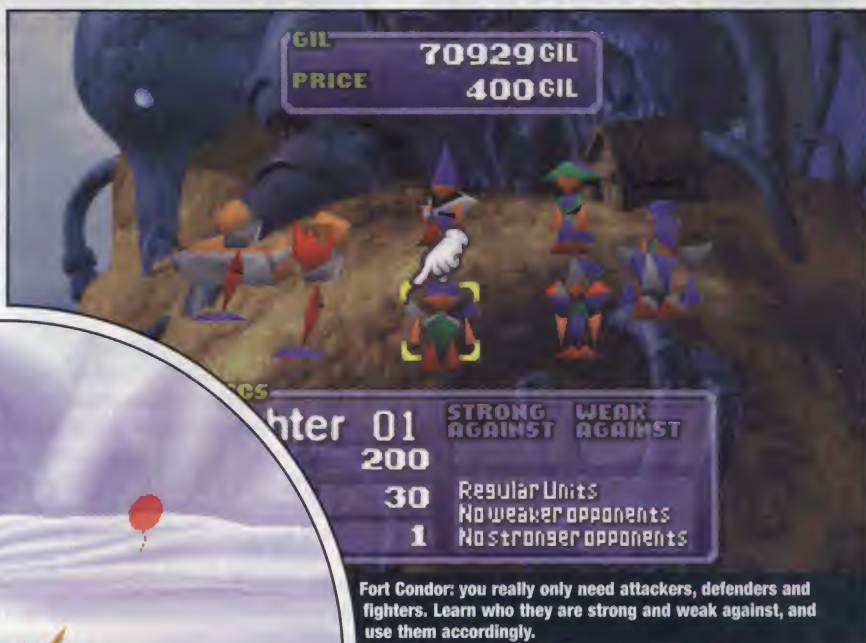
This is like a basic *Command & Conquer*. Buy loads of troops at the start (up to 20) – use a mix of fighters, attackers and defenders and forget the others. When the enemies start arriving, send them into the fray. Leave a few troops around the shed to defend it, but swarming the enemy is otherwise the best tactic.

When you play this one as a 'plot element' (where you're trying to recover the Huge materia on disc two), you can either fight the battle through to the bitter end or go for the (much easier) option, which is to allow the enemies to overrun the base. Do this and you'll have an easy boss battle, no problemo.

SUBMARINE CHASE

As a 'plot game', this is easy peasy. You start out just behind your target – the red submarine carrying Huge materia – so all you have to do is shoot the shit out of it and wham! – mission accomplished.

At Gold Saucer, however, you have to take out every submarine in the area. Use your sonar (Pagedown) to watch for blips. Follow them and take out the subs. Take care to avoid the mines that are lying around, but be quick – your sub's a bit sluggish and you've only got ten minutes.



BEATING WEAPON

There are actually four Weapons scattered around the world. If you don't know who or what Weapon is, go to Icicle Inn on the Northern continent. In a house on the left of the village is a video player – watch the video to be enlightened. For those of you who know only too well what Weapon is, you probably want to beat him, right?

You don't have to defeat Emerald and Ruby. However, you *do* need to face Ultima and survive (although you don't have to defeat him), and you *do* need to defeat Diamond. It's worth killing them all, however, as good things can happen.

RUBY WEAPON

Ruby Weapon lives in the desert near Gold Saucer, so you need a gold chocobo to get near him (breeding one is a fairly long-winded process, explained last issue). But before you go galloping up to him, get into a normal fight with any weedy little enemy. Kill off two party members then fight Ruby. If you don't do this, Ruby removes them permanently. Revive your two members as soon as the fight starts.

You should have a Hades materia from the Sunken Plane (use the submarine to find it), and ideally you should also have the same materia as for Emerald Weapon (W-Summon, Mime, Knights Of Round).

Open with Hades. This freezes Ruby in time, leaving you free to W-Summon Knights Of Round and mime it a few times. As soon as you see him moving again, cast Hades again. Then repeat Knights Of Round. That's basically it.

Ruby's a difficult baddie to finish off, but nowhere near as evil as Emerald. It takes time, though – be prepared to stick at it.

ULTIMA WEAPON

You meet Ultima Weapon once you've beaten the Fort Condor Huge materia quest with Cid at the helm. (At this point, Cloud is a gibbering wreck in hospital.) Cid suggests you "pay the little fella a visit", so head for Mideel on the Southern Continent. Speak with Cloud, and Ultima will attack the village.

Before you speak with Cloud, ensure that at least one of your party members has their HP well above 2000. If this isn't the case, go to Cosmo Canyon and buy some HP Plus materia.

Cid, trying to act the hero, taunts Weapon and engages him in combat. Attack Ultima with all you've got, but cast Cure if he twats any of your boys (or, indeed, girls). After a while, the screen announces that he is about to use his Ultima Beam on you. This ominous, threatening (and lethal) blue beam causes about 2000 HP of damage to all your party. To win the fight, all you have to do is survive this blast and hit him again, after which he flies away.

Later on you can defeat Ultima entirely. You need Highwind, and you also need to have defeated Diamond Weapon (see below). Ultima will be hovering over a big pool just behind Midgar – fly into him and beat him up as much as you can. He will fly off again – follow him and crash into him until he flies to a particular place and stops over it.

Your final battle with Ultima takes place over Cosmo Canyon. Beating him sends him crashing to the ground, and also gives Cloud his ultimate weapon. This beast causes massive damage, but the damage done decreases depending on how many HP Cloud has left.

DIAMOND WEAPON

After your visit to the City of the Ancients on disc two, you meet Diamond. Diamond emerges from the ocean, heading for Midgar. Fly Highwind to Midgar, and wait

on the beach for Diamond to arrive. Physical attacks have sod-all effect on Diamond unless his breast plate is open. Unfortunately, when it is it means he's about to kill you. So use your strongest summons and spells on him – there's no easy way to do it – but make sure you use Cure or Elixirs regularly. Eventually, something truly explosive happens.

EMERALD WEAPON

Emerald lives underwater, so you need to use the submarine to get to him. He moves around a lot, so simply search around the centre of the map until you eventually find him. Bump into him and prepare for the hardest battle in the game.

Fighting Emerald is only for the brave... or people who have the following: one mastered Knights Of Round materia, three Mime materias, one Final Attack materia (see last month's Gold Saucer Battle Square comments), one W-Summon materia (also from Gold Saucer) and at least one Revive materia at level two or higher. And plenty of curative stuff. Got all that? Then you're all set.

Pair Final Attack with a Revive materia. That way, if whoever holds this combo croaks, they come back to life! Also, get as many Counterattack materias as you can – equip them all on one person. The more one person has, the more times they'll counter-attack if they get smacked.

Emerald will often pre-empt you with a stomp attack, but not always. Start with W-Summon Knights Of The Round (ie cast it twice in one turn); all other party members should Mime this. By this point, Emerald is ready to attack again, so have something curative ready (a Megalixir's good). Cure, then repeat the W-Summon trick (everyone should Mime it again). Continue this process until Emerald is dead. It takes time – he has one million HP – but keep at it and you'll beat him. Eventually.

At some point, the eyes on his shell light up, indicating that he's about to use some different attacks. Some eyes drain MP, whereas others inflict damage. Use a spell or Summon to destroy them. Be warned though: sometimes when they're all destroyed, Emerald counters with his Aire Tam Storm attack, which usually kills your entire party instantly. Now you see why you need that Final Attack materia.

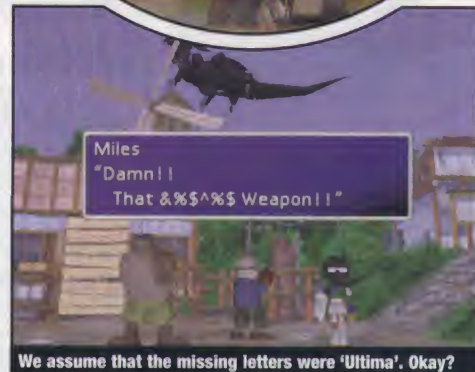
Remember: defeating Emerald isn't easy, and you won't beat him straight away. [2]



Emerald Weapon has a slash up against the Sunken Plane. Ooh, he's so hard.



Ruby is so fun and fruity. Ruby make you manly man.



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THE EIGHTH DEADLY SiN

WIN!

A weekend in Amsterdam, plus 10 copies of the red-hot 3D shoot 'em up *SiN*!

Thou shalt not fanny about with thy neighbour's wife.' Not officially one of the seven deadly sins, we know – not in the biblical sense, anyhow – but not a bad piece of advice by anyone's standards. 'Thou shalt not shoot thy friends in the face with a double-barrelled shotgun.' Again, useful in real life, but of no use whatsoever in Activision's new blast-fest *SiN*. If you caught our review last issue, you'll know just how much we liked the game. "It would be a sin to overlook it," said the laconic Steve Hill, who gave the game 91 per cent and a *PC ZONE* Classic award as a result.

So, in celebration of this PC gaming milestone, we're offering one lucky reader the chance to win a 'most expenses'-paid sinful weekend in Amsterdam for two. That way, you can get up to all kinds of naughty stuff in keeping with the theme of the game (but no shooting people in the face with a shotgun, you hear?). You'll also receive a copy of *SiN*.

Ten runner-up prize winners get a copy of the game plus a *SiN*-T-shirt for their efforts.

To be in with a chance of winning this sinfully cool prize, just answer the question and complete the tie-breaker, and send them, along with with all the information requested, to the address shown.

QUESTION Name the seven deadly sins.

TIE-BREAKER Make up your own *eighth* deadly sin, and tell us all about it in no more than 50 words.

- ✦ Entrants must be 18 years of age or older.
- ✦ Name / Address / Postcode / Daytime phone number / Email / Job title / Company name
- ✦ Please tell us if you do not wish to receive details of further special offers or new products from other companies
- ✦ Are you a current subscriber to *PC ZONE*?



Send your entries to: I Have SiNned, CPCZ9813B, Customer Interface, Bradley Pavilions, Bradley Stoke North, Bristol BS12 0BQ, UK. The closing date is Friday 11 December 1998.

✦ **Terms and conditions:** Only entries with all the questions completed and received before the closing date will be entered into the prize draw. Winners will be notified by post. No cash alternative. Prizes not necessarily as shown. No correspondence will be entered into. The Editor's decision is final. All the other usual competition rules, conditions and restrictions apply. And all that. Phew!

ACTIVISION

FIRST PRIZE

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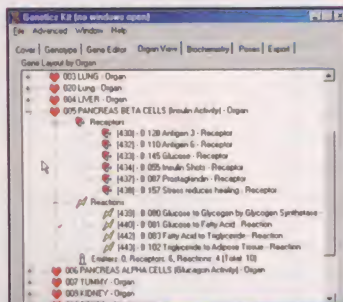
CREATURES 2

**CHEATMASTER
SPECIAL**

ON THE CD NEXT MONTH

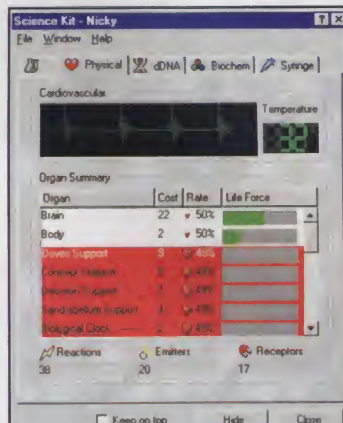
Check out the January issue of *PC ZONE* for exclusive new *Creatures 2* files

Creatures 2 fans are in for a treat next month when we'll have a whole host of new files to expand and enhance the game. These files are unavailable anywhere else, not even on the Internet, so make sure you send your norms down the newsagent on Tuesday 15 December to pick up a copy.



TIP #1

Creating the best creatures takes time. Save your results!



TIP #3

After pumping your norms with drugs, watch them closely.

Get your norms higher up the evolutionary ladder as *Toby Simpson* and *Mark Ashton* teach us all a bit of slap and tickle

★ REVIEWED PCZ #68 SCORE 90%

TIP #1

★ DOLLY THE SHEEP-CLONING SPECIALS

If you get a particularly cool creature you can create clones. Make sure the creature you wish to clone is the selected one (using the Creatures menu), then export it to a file on your hard drive using Export Current Creature from the File menu. This removes the creature from the world and places it in a file on disk. You can now create copies of this file to make lots of any creature that you wish. This technique is handy if you want to keep copies of the creatures you're about to genetically splice using the genetic splicing machine, just in case the resultant creature is a hideous mutant.

TIP #2

★ BERRIES, BERRIES, EVERYWHERE

Take a note of which berries have medicinal qualities, and mark the place where they grow. The little yellow ones that grow in the biopod underneath the desert island, for example, are highly medicinal and useful for combating some of the poisons (such as cyanide) that a creature may pick up.

TIP #3

★ **CHEMICAL MIXING MACHINE** At the bottom far left of the map is a chemical mixing machine that enables you to produce your own chemical concoctions and feed them to creatures. But you need to be careful with this! Used wrongly you can confuse, poison or disorientate your creature. As a hint, the first four levels of the blue component give various foodstuffs that are harmless. Add a little yellow and you never know what might happen, so

be careful to monitor the results in the Science Kit applet.

TIP #4

★ BE SPARING WITH THE SLAP AND TICKLE

Every time you tickle or slap your creature, it generates reward or punishment. These are chemicals that flow over the brain and enable the creature to learn whether actions it has taken are good or bad. If you slap and tickle them all the time, they are forever 'taught' that whatever they were doing is a wise or unwise move – which can lead to confusion in the brain. So think twice before engaging in a long-term tickling campaign.

TIP #5

★ **ROMANCE IS IN THE AIR** Trouble breeding? No problem. Take a mating pair of creatures to the desert island – this is to the right of the incubator area, and there is a boat that takes you directly there. On the desert island's eastern jetty, there is a massive horn instrument called the love horn (!); the island is the Island of Love. When both creatures are near the horn, click on the mouthpiece to play a tune of love. This puts lots of pheromones into the air and gives even the most stubborn creature a Viagra-like dose of sex drive. They'll soon be at it like rabbits. The best thing is that they'll recover their sex drive in seconds, so they can have another go. And that includes the males. So no rolling over and going straight to sleep.

TIP #6

★ DEALING WITH SHORT ATTENTION SPANS

Some creatures may be particularly

unco-operative. The cute little guys wandering around near the incubator are called 'learning critters'. If you click on one, it pops up a little speech bubble with the name of an object – such as food – in it. This then teaches that word to all creatures within hearing range. If you click on several of these, you can teach a lot of the word vocabulary to a norm.

TIP #7

★ ATTRACTING CREATURE ATTENTION TO A PARTICULAR OBJECT

If you've already named an object (see tip immediately above for a short cut), you can attract a norm's attention to it by just typing the name of the object into a speech bubble. So if your creature already knows that cheese is called 'food', then typing the word 'food' into a speech bubble and hitting 'enter' usually attracts the creature's attention to the nearest lump of cheese.

TIP #8

★ **PUFFER FISH** The puffer fish are a fantastic aid to drowning – stopping it, that is. These cute little green fish wait till a norm falls into the sea, and then they inflate with air and rescue the creature. It doesn't work 100 per cent of the time, but if you have a little shoal of puffer fish, then you're normally safe from norms drowning while you're not around.

TIP #9

★ **POISONS – A REFERENCE** This reference table (on opposite page) is reprinted from the *Creatures 2 Strategies And Secrets* book, published by Sybex Inc (www.sybex.com), priced £14.99.



TIP #4

Smack my norm up (or throw cheese at it instead).

TIP #5

Take your norms to the Island of Love to mate.



TIP #6

Don't go teaching your norms bad language.



TIP #7

Use speech bubbles to communicate with your norms.



TOXINS IN CREATURES 2

RADIATION

Creatures exposed to radiation get heavy metals in their bloodstream. Heavy metals damage the bones, and hence the organ repair mechanism. The treatment for radiation is a compound called EDTA, or ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid if you're a chemistry head.

GEDDONASE

A toxin that breaks down adipose, which is a creature's very long-term fat storage. This reaction releases a small amount of glucose.

GLYCOTOXIN

Breaks down glycogen, which creatures use as an emergency energy store. Injecting the infected creature with arnica acts as a cure.

CYANIDE

Stops the creature's heart. The cure for this is sodium thiosulphite. You can normally keep a creature alive by continuously injecting the defibrillant mixture on the Syringe page in the Science Kit applet until cyanide decays (about 15 seconds). A better treatment is a combination of defibrillant and sodium thiosulphite.

SLEEP TOXIN

Converts a reduction in sleepiness into sleepiness, making creatures very tired. Sleep toxin causes no lasting damage and wears off relatively quickly. This usually appears as a result of a bacterial infection.

FEVER TOXIN

Shuts down the skin organ, making it difficult for the creature to cool itself and causing overheating and dehydration. This is usually a result of a bacterial infection.

BELLADONNA

Slows down the heart. This reduces the rate at which ATP is produced, and can be potentially fatal.

ADIPOSE

Not a toxin in normal conditions, as it is a long-term fat store. However, in great quantities the creature is effectively 'obese', and this can lead to heart disease.

★ You can monitor the presence of these toxins using the Science Kit Biochem page, and also even inject them from the Syringe page as long as you've collected the Advanced Science Kit applet pick-up.

TIP #9

Puffer fish will prevent your norms from drowning.



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WRITE TO Dear Wazza, PC ZONE, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ.

EMAIL Address your letters to us at letters.pczone@dennis.co.uk with the subject heading 'Dear Wazza'.

Please note: while we can assure you that we read every techie query sent to us, we are unable to offer personal replies. Also, please do not phone, because we're too busy putting the mag together. Thanks.

GET RIGHT WITH ME

Q I can confirm the suspicions in your November issue (Bulletin, PCZ #69) about a CIH virus within *Wing Commander: Secret Ops*. I downloaded the full 112Mb version (*Jesus! - Ed*) as soon as it was available using GetRight, which names incomplete downloads to something like *.getright. On completion of the download GetRight reset the file extension to .exe, at which point Norton AntiVirus kicked in and told me that the file contained the virus. May I suggest you get a copy of Norton - it saved me!

More than slightly miffed, I emailed Origin/EA, and to their credit they replied with an apology. But seeing as you had to register with EA to get an access code to enable the game, I don't see why they couldn't email those of us who had registered as soon as the virus was discovered.

On a completely different note, what does PC ZONE think about Dixon's Freeserve ISP service?

Rod Mason, email

A Hey, nice plug for GetRight slipped in there. Readers can find more information on this handy utility which, as Rod says, enables you to continue with incomplete downloads and a lot more other useful stuff besides, at www.getright.com/. You can also find it on our cover disc.

We first ran a warning about the CIH virus in our October issue (PCZ #68), but as it's still very much doing the rounds (it's cropped up several times in the office over the last few weeks), it's definitely worth reminding readers of its existence once again. If you don't have a virus checker installed, we strongly advise you to get one. You can find information on CIH and trail software at www.symantec.co.uk/, www.mcafee.com/ and www.dr Solomon.com/home/home.cfm.

Electronic Arts acted promptly to remove the virus from the *Secret Ops* download available at www.specops.com/ although, like you, we don't quite understand why they didn't email registered users with advice, rather than waiting for gamers to discover the virus for themselves.

As for Dixon's Freeserve, we haven't tested it yet but we'd be very interested to hear comments from readers who have. Indeed, here at PC ZONE we are often asked to recommend an Internet Service Provider. We wouldn't want to appear biased to one particular service, so let's throw it over to you lot. Write in and tell us about experiences - good or bad - with your ISP and we'll print some of your opinions in a couple of months' time. As always, there's a cool £50 up for grabs for the best contribution.

MYSTERY SOUND

Q A couple of months back I bought a PC with a sound card included. The thing is, I don't know what it is. Is there a way I can find out without any hassle?

Simon Godwyn, email

A Assuming you're running Windows 95/98, simply go to the Control Panel, select System, then click on the Device Manager tag. Your sound card should be listed under Sound, Video and Game Controllers. If

for any reason it isn't, and you don't mind taking the case off your PC, you may well find that the product name is printed on the sound board itself. Oh, and the advice given by this month's £50 winner may be useful.

TRASHED

Q I have three extremely annoying and irritating problems.

1) Whenever I empty my recycle bin, Windows always brings up an error message saying it cannot delete the file 'D' (it then gives a number) because the file is in use. But no such file exists anywhere on my PC! If I

“In the end I resorted to pulling the Windows key out of the keyboard with a pair of pliers. Worked a treat, but it seems rather an extreme length to go to”

TIM BROMIGE

attempt to empty the recycle bin a second time it works fine. Why?

2) When I run certain programs such as *Championship Manager 2* and *Eye Of The Beholder*, everything works fine until I quit. Even if I do so normally, my desktop screen has a large chunk of the left-hand side missing, so everything gets smaller and squashed up. Is it just because they are DOS-based programs? Can I prevent it?

3) In your October issue (PCZ #68) you recommended using Tweak UI to clear rogue entries from the Add/Remove Programs section of the Control Panel. As I also have this problem I downloaded PowerToys from Microsoft's site as suggested. I unzipped the file and was presented with a series of folders and files, but no program which I could run. It didn't add anything to the Control Panel menu. Did I download the wrong file?

Paul Edwards, email

A We've never experienced a problem with our recycle bin as described. If any readers have an idea as to what

the fault is here, please let us know and we'll pass the advice on. You haven't really supplied enough detail on your second problem, Paul, so it's difficult to know what to suggest, although it's almost certainly a problem with your graphics card or monitor. Again, maybe other readers have experienced something similar?

As for PowerToys, did you try reading the *Readme.txt* file that comes with the program? Admittedly the instructions aren't very clear, but all you need to do is right-click on the *Tweakul.inf* file (or the

equivalent for whichever component you wish to set up), and then select Install from the pop-up menu.

KEY BORED

Q Am I the only one to have problems with the ubiquitous bloody Windows key when playing DOS games like *Tomb Raider*? No one else has mentioned the rage and loathing generated every time they hit the 'bonus' key between Ctrl and Alt, thus being unceremoniously dumped back into everyone's favourite Microsoft product, with no return to the game possible except via a reload. I have tried to find a solution in the Help files, which is a classic triumph of hope over experience. I have even tried professional help, but the shrink didn't know what a computer game was. In the end I resorted to pulling the key out of the keyboard with a pair of pliers. Worked a treat, but it seems rather an extreme length to go to just to play a game, however good it is. In other words, is there another solution?

Tim Bromige, email →

NUMBER'S UP

Q You may have printed this tip previously, but did you know that every piece of hardware made or sold in America has a Federal Communications

Commission (FCC) code which identifies the kit? Look at a piece of hardware and somewhere on it will be a code that looks something like this: FCC ID: K2Y PRO16 (this code is for an Opti sound card which I found gathering dust). Certain Web pages (such as www.fcc.gov/oet/fccid/) let you to type in the FCC number which can then help you identify the kit. Cool or what?

Craig Cotter, email

A Pretty cool, Craig, yeah, although the FCC Web pages don't give that much information on what the product is. Still, we guess it's a tip which may be of use to someone, somewhere, so you win this month's £50.

**£50
WINNER!**

A Your shrink doesn't know what a computer game is? Ours does. In fact, computer games are the *reason* we visit her. Anyway, sit back and relax. There is a solution to your problem and it comes in the form of a utility called **Doswinky** which, yep, disables the key. You'll find it at www.microsoft.com/windows/download/doswinky.exe. **Double-click on the file and three files are extracted. Open Doswinky.inf with a text editor to view the installation instructions. Session over. That's £100, please.**

LIVE LIAR?

Q Someone is lying regarding the Creative Labs Sound Blaster Live! audio board. On page 28 of your November issue (PCZ #69), you say: "The board is based around the EMU10K1 processor... offering, it is claimed, the equivalent of having a 90MHz Pentium processor dedicated to audio work", but in a hardware catalogue I have it says: "The EMU10K1 sound processor has the equivalent processing power of a P166MMX." I hope the latter is right, because that's a lot of power. Can anyone at PC ZONE clarify? Also, I'm considering buying a DVD drive and someone recommended a Panasonic model to me. Do you know what advantages this has over the others?

Lee Monamy, email

A The information quoted was given to us by Creative themselves at a press launch for the board. While we have no reason to doubt the figure, we obviously have no way of verifying it as a fact, which is why we used the phrase "it is claimed" – and, indeed, the words "said to" in our review of the board (PCZ #70, 89%). Whether equivalent to a P90 or P166MMX, the real point here is that the EMU10K1 is a very powerful audio chip. Creative claim that it's capable of processing 100MIPS (million instructions per second). Does that help you with your purchasing decision? No, thought not.

As for DVD-ROM/RAM, we wouldn't want to recommend a particular model as we've only seen a couple of drives, neither of which is from Panasonic. We haven't reviewed any to date simply because there have been few (if any) reasons for gamers to rush out and buy one. We will,

however, be looking at some DVD-ROM drives over the coming months.

FREE TRANSFER

Q I'm getting a new PC soon to replace my old P150. Trouble is, I have about 200Mb of stuff on my computer (my *Quake II* maps, MP3s etc) and most of the files are over 1.4Mb. I don't really want to spend a couple of hundred quid on an Iomega Zip drive (*They're more like £120, actually – Ed*) just to move some stuff, but my files are irreplaceable. My friend and I use direct cable connection for games every now and then and the data transfer rate is terrible (half an hour for 2.5Mb). For 200Mb that makes... a lot of

hours. My question is, should I fork out £50 for a couple of cheap network cards? Do they give a faster transfer rate, or would I be

them onto floppy disks with PKZip or WinZip using the Span Disk option, although of course this will take ages. The

“After five minutes he got a strange burning smell. Then seconds after he opened the case, the processor literally burst into flames and partially fried the motherboard. Say no to overclocking”

CHRIS STEELE-DAVIS

better off taking my hard drive out of the P150 and putting it in the new machine?

John Harvey, email

A Firstly, the fact that most of your files are over 1.4Mb each doesn't make a difference. You can still put

simplest solution is to use the serial connection, although your data transfer rate does seem very low. Are you sure you've got everything set up correctly? You might want to check the port settings on each machine. A parallel link-up

would definitely be quicker (a lead should only cost £10 or so), and yes, a network connection would be faster still, if you don't mind splashing out.

The best solution, really, is to temporarily fit the old hard disk into your new PC and then copy the files from one drive to another. Assuming they're IDE drives, however, you'll need to play around with the drive's master and slave jumper settings – possibly not something that the novice should get involved with. You might as well persevere with that serial lead link-up, even if it means leaving the machines on overnight. **✉**

READERS' LIVES

ZONE readers share their experiences of overclocking processors

A few months back we asked for your experiences in overclocking processors – that is, giving your PC a performance boost by running the CPU at a speed faster than the manufacturer intended. Naturally the likes of Intel and AMD don't condone such a practice and, even though we received just a couple of negative stories among the dozens of letters we received, overclocking is not something we at ZONE are prepared to endorse either.

No matter how small the risk, we really don't want to be held responsible for readers frying their processors. In fact, we're not even going to tell you how to do it. If you want more information we suggest you visit www.hardwarecentral.com/hardware/cpu/overclocking/, www.tomshardware.com/overclock.html or www.sysopt.com/overc.html.

Anyway, here are the thoughts and comments from some of you lot. And thanks to everyone who took the time to write in.

A My previous system was a P150 which was starting to get a bit long in the tooth, so I decided to take the plunge and overclock her. The motherboard was an Intel-based Acer board with only one bus speed, 60MHz. I overclocked the chip to the only other available speed of 180MHz – a 20 per cent speed increase. This was done over a year ago now and the

machine is showing no signs of ill effect. Just remember to use a good ball bearing-based cooling fan on the chip and everything should be okay.

Craig McKinlay, email

A There's only one way to go if you're a 'clocker' and a cheapskate – an Intel Celeron running at 400MHz on an Abit BX6 motherboard with some 100MHz RAM. Couple it with a Voodoo2-based 3D accelerator then sit back and laugh when you see how quick it runs. Check out my page for more info and benchmarks: www.gribbsy.demon.co.uk/celeron.htm.

Steve Griggs, email

A I'd like to say *don't do it!* I used to have a P90MHz which I overclocked to 100MHz but it made little difference. A mate decided to overclock his Cytrix 166MHz up to 200MHz. After five minutes he got a strange burning smell, then seconds after he opened up the case the processor literally burst into flames and partially fried the motherboard. Say no to overclocking!

Chris Steele-Davis, email

A I've been overclocking my AMD K6 200 to 266MHz successfully for nearly a year. To keep the machine cool (particularly in hot weather) I've found it necessary to add a 12cm brushless cooling fan to my case (which sounds like

a gale). Avoiding old expansion cards is a must, as many cannot handle overclocking. I'm currently using an Aopen AP5T motherboard with the bus clocked to 75MHz with a 3.5 clock multiplier. There is an 83.3MHz setting, but using this causes wobbly lines on BBC2! I previously had a Cytrix 686 which was overclocked, but it wasn't very stable.

Robert Groom, email

A My advice: make sure the bus speed remains at the same setting the processor requires and only the multiple changes (most important); have a decent heat sink and fan on the processor – not a cheapo piece of tack that comes with most home-grown or unbranded systems (they're only a tenner or so); and make sure you have enough air circulation inside the machine. Oh, and make sure cables are tied back properly so they can't fall into a position where they could block or jam the fan.

Richard Alan Ross-Skedd, email

A I set my Intel P200MMX to 233MHz (actually 255MHz, but the BIOS seems to think that it's 233MHz) and overclocked my Voodoo card by changing some stuff in my autoexec file. There was a noticeable performance increase, but problems soon started to appear – Need For

Speed 2 would lock up after just a few minutes of play, for example – so I put my CPU's speed back down. Even then, textures would flicker randomly in accelerated games like *Quake II* and *Unreal*, so I had to put my 3D card's speed back down as well. Clockers beware.

Adrian Peel, West Sussex

A I say that overclocking your CPU is great for quick and cheap speed: If you can handle the heat problems. I have a P133 which I changed to a P166 (I can even change to a P200!). As yet I've had no problems at all. Be warned though: overclocking will take a couple of years off your processor's lifespan, and if you don't cool your processor with fans and heat sinks, your PC probably won't even start up. Only take the chance with clocking if you have a good cooling system.

J Chiu, Watford

A I bought a ChainTech motherboard (6LTM) with a 266MHz Pentium II a little while back and aimed to overclock it to 300MHz – but managed to get it up to 333MHz!!! I also know someone who has overclocked a 333 to a 375 and his machine works like a dream. But beware: overclocking can have the disadvantage of making a machine very unstable.

Matthew Cornish, email

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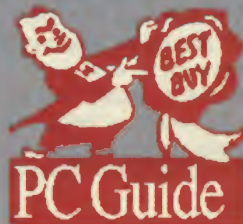
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Starfighter on the Web: **<http://www.real3d.com>**

PC Format, July 1998

HOW TO...

SPOT A BARGAIN PC



It's a nightmare: you've got the cash; you've got that copy of *Half-Life*; but how do you choose the ideal PC to suit your gaming needs? **PC ZONE** has the answer

★ WORDS Adam Phillips

TOP TIPS

- ★ "Have a chat with the sales guy and assess his attitude. If you're not comfortable, walk away – after all, PCs cost a lot of money. Also, if he says something outrageous like 'You'll need a 450MHz PC and 120Mb to play *Space Invaders*', leave" – Nick Mounfield of *Computer Shopper* magazine.
- ★ Try to get a tech-head mate to go to the shop with you to argue the specs with the sales bods, or to handle the salesman on the other end of the phone. A clued-up punter can soon strip away a salesman's bullshit.
- ★ Think about what you want from your machine: how upgradable do you want it to be? Do you really need that overpriced sound card? Get the spec down on paper and *before* you start looking. Never ever go shopping with no idea of what you want. If you do, you're pretty much guaranteed to come out with more than you want.
- ★ Check the small print in adverts and look out for the acronym E&OE (Errors and omissions excepted). In other words, if your machine turns up and isn't *exactly* what you ordered, the company are within their legal right to say it was due to a 'mistake' in the original ad. Get specs confirmed in writing by the company before buying.
- ★ Most punters won't be able to cough up the full amount on the day of purchase. Options are to get a bank loan, use a credit card (check with your card provider to see if they offer insurance on credit card transactions) or get a credit deal via the company you're buying from. While the latter is not the most cost-effective method when it comes to interest rates, they can offer useful buy-now-pay-later deals. Again, be sure to read the small print.

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For the latest news and reviews go to the *Computer Shopper* homepage at www.compshopper.co.uk.

It's the most frustrating moment for any gamer. It starts with the hype: magazines screaming at you that the latest game from Big Software looks like it'll be the dog's bollocks. The anticipation builds until *The Next Big Thing* touches down to rave reviews. The hyperbole comes thick and fast: "the most amazing graphics we've ever witnessed"; "gameplay that lasts weeks"; "enough action to put hairs on Anthea Turner's chest" (*Eh?—Ed*). It's great. Your wallet's about to jump out of your pocket and rush down to Dixons to buy it for you. Until your eyes inevitably wander over to the minimum specs breakdown: "requires the latest kick-ass, ball-busting PC with a 1000MHz processor and the Ninja Fat Git (And Then Some) Graphics Card..."

Fuck! It's like being shown the greatest pair of love handles in the world and not being able to hang on to them. Well, nearly. You put down the magazine, head back to that under-powered sonofabitch PC cowering on your desk and pick up that worn copy of *Civilization 2*, muttering that you don't need cutting-edge graphics to make a great game anyway. And you'd be right, of course, but it sucks all the same – especially when something like *Half-Life* comes along and kicks your aging PC so hard in the proverbial bollocks that its self-esteem lands in a dark alley somewhere near Grimsby.

There is a solution to your problem, however. Two solutions, in fact, depending on how much cash you've got stuffed under the floorboards: either buy a new PC or



TIME TO UPGRADE

From top to bottom: *Klingon: Honour Guard*, *Half-Life*, and the up-coming *Duke Nukem 4 Ever*. No, your P75 can't run 'em, so ain't it about time you upgraded your PC?

PC PAMPERED

Found your dream machine with a down-to-earth price? Jolly good, but be sure that you've got your ass covered – check the warranty

Typically, if something goes wrong with a machine within the first year, you're well within your rights to go and throw it at whoever supplied it.

The most ideal warranty for peace of mind and 'ease of use' is an onsite one where you won't have to send the PC back to the manufacturers. Instead they come out and sort it out for you. Some companies offer onsite warranties for free. For example: Evesham Micros have an excellent two-year onsite parts and labour warranty. Others, such as Dan, require an extra £42 for an onsite warranty covering a single year.

Further still, some companies offer extended warranties where for £400-£500 you can get a five-year guarantee. Think about it though – most things that can go wrong with computers usually happen within the first year; are you going to have the same machine in five years' time? Thought not. Put the cash you would have spent on that all-singing, all-dancing five-year warranty and slap it in the bank. If something should go wrong two years down the line (keep an eye on that hard drive, folks), then it's going to be cheaper for you to simply replace it yourself – by then you'll know how to.

TALKING BOLLOCKS!

All computer ads like to drown you in a wave of technobabble. "Two PCI Expansion slots! And a chip cache!" What the hell does that mean and, more importantly, will it make *Unreal* run any quicker? To help you tackle the slimy-looking retailer wearing that Arthur Daley matching flat cap and jacket, acquaint yourself with PC geek-speak with this layman's guide

CHIP CACHE

Shifts data around the chip more quickly.

Example Just make sure you get a processor that has one

CLOCKING

Making hardware (such as your processor) go quicker than the manufacturer specifies. Intel's Celeron chip is very good for this. Rip up that warranty though.

Example Celeron 300A can be clocked to 400MHz

3D GRAPHICS CARD

Designed to speed up 3D by processing graphics data on the card's dedicated chipsets.

Example Voodoo2, 3Dfx

MOTHERBOARD

The hub of your PC – everything slots into this.

Example PII chip needs BX-based motherboard with Slot 1. Throw that phrase at a salesman and watch him run home to his mother. AMD and Cyrix chips need a Socket 7 motherboard with multi-voltages. Watch the salesman shrivel up and die

INTEL PROCESSOR

The world's best-selling range of processors, and the brains of your computer. Latest offerings are PII and Celeron ranges. If you're buying Celeron, make sure you go for the 300A type – it has an on-chip cache which the original doesn't.

Example Celeron 300A

AMD/CYRIX PROCESSORS

Cheaper rivals to the Intel range, but with lower number crunching capabilities, which means some 3D games will have a slight performance trade-off. Judging by some letters to Watchdog, there *may* be problems with some software compatibility because the Intel processor is the standard chip to design for.

Example AMD K6-2/Cyrix MII

SCSI

An interface (usually a card) that enables you to attach extra peripherals to your PC. Very fast, but expensive.

Example Adaptec 2940UW

DVD DRIVE

A new capacity format. Discs are the same size as CDs, but hold much more information. There are signs that software companies will be using the technology in future game releases – *Lander* from Psygnosis, for example.

PCI/ISA SLOTS

Another interface standard. You should expect to have at least four PCI slots and a minimum of two ISA ones. Basically helps with future proofing by enabling you to plug in extra cards and so forth. ISA slots are a lot slower, so use only for non-speed-essential devices like modems and sound cards.

SERIAL

What your PC uses to talk to your external peripherals. Slow but reliable, and useful for two-player link-ups if you've only got one mate (you sad bastard).

USB

Allegedly a future standard which connects external peripherals to your PC. Leaps and bounds faster than the old Serial standard. Peripherals thin on the ground at the moment though.

SDRAM

Newer standard of memory available in bigger chunks. Faster than the old SIMMs so as to keep up with newer processors.

PARALLEL

Originally designed for your printer to plug into. The standard has been upped over recent years to allow hardware such as Zip drives.

TOM'S HARDWARE GUIDE

last updated October 16, 1998

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Detailed information about the new Katmai features, 3D games start depending on AGP

K6-2 Performance Issues
Patrick Schmidt checked the asynchronous memory timing of VIA's MVP3 and overlocking of AMD's K6-2

Intel's Latest Roadmap Q3-98
Intel's latest roadmap. New! No price drops on August 24! Read about Cascades and Coppermine, Camino and Camel, ...

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The future of RISC, will Intel get the crown here too?

Reviews

NEW NVIDIA vs. 3Dfx - TNT vs. The Voodoos
What's the best 3D chip for you? Is 3Dfx still on top of things or is NVIDIA taking over the lead?

3D-Chip Review Q3-98
The real deal about 3Dfx Voodoo Banshee, Matrox G200, NVIDIA RIVA TNT and S3 Savage3D

Big CPU Shoot Out - Intel Launches New Celeron with Mendocino Core and Pentium II 450
All Socket 7 and Slot 1 CPUs tested under Windows 98, Windows NT 4, also 3D gaming and professional rendering

Comprehensive Voodoo2 Card Review
What are the differences between the Voodoo2 3D cards on the market? Tom's Hardware Guide is helping you making a decision for which Voodoo2 card you should go for.


For über-technie details, check out www.tomshardware.com.



FUTURE PERFECT?

Future proofing is generally a cynical marketing fallacy designed to make punters feel happy about splashing out £1500. But there are things you should look out for to safeguard your PC's future...

- ✦ Enough PCI slots to add new cards over the next couple of years.
- ✦ Don't buy PCs which feature non-standard components – they're costly and hellish to upgrade.
- ✦ Go for the best hardware you can afford at the time. It's much more likely to hold its own until the next generation of computers are released.
- ✦ Bear in mind that you'll need more memory, bigger hard drives, faster graphics cards etc as time goes on. (See the Upgraded panel opposite for more details.)
- ✦ Some companies, such as Gateway, offer 'Obsolescence Protection' whereby you can trade in your computer for a new one after two years. Carrera offer this option on individual components such as graphic cards as well. As with everything, remember to read the small print.



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Check out Special Reserve's website at www.special.reserve.co.uk for an up-to-date list of discounted hardware and software.

Splashing out on a brand new PC is not a cheap event in your bank balance's life. By the time it comes round to getting a new system, you may well find yourself still paying off the old one. If cash flow is a problem, then the following upgradable components may breathe life into your old PC yet

specialist chipsets – some covering 3D, some 2D, and some both. Check out our in-depth look at graphic cards next issue (on sale Tuesday 15 December).

MEMORY

Less thrashing of your hard drive due to more data being stored in the memory, therefore speeding up performance. If you have a P166 and above, this is probably the best way to give your PC an instant kick up the backside.

HARD DRIVE

More storage for full installs of games like *Quake II* which eat hard drive space for breakfast, lunch and dinner. If you have an IDE interface, make sure you get a UDMA2-compatible drive. If SCSI, make sure your adaptor and drive are of the Ultra Wide (UW) variety.

SOUND CARD

Buying a decent sound card adds immeasurably to the atmosphere of a game, with many of the newer cards boasting cinema-type sound effects.

CD ROM

The higher the speed, the less time it takes to install games and the quicker games run from CD.

GRAPHICS CARD

These take the number crunching onus off the processor, and have

PROCESSOR AND MOTHERBOARD

An upgrade can make everything a great deal quicker. For example, a P133 processor can be upgraded to a P200, which gives you a significant performance increase.

➔ upgrade your existing kit. Perhaps you have an aging 486 that, with a new processor, motherboard, graphics card and more memory, could be turned into a respectable games machine (see the Upgraded panel above right for more details). Alternatively, the cost of upgrading your machine could ultimately be so expensive that it's a better idea to buy a new PC altogether.

So what's regarded as the ideal 'entry point' for games-playing punters these days? "Any Pentium II system will do the job," states Nick Mounfield of *PC ZONE's* sister magazine, *Computer Shopper*. "Nothing less than an Intel PII 350MHz though, or

an AMD K6-2 or a Cyrix MII [see Talking Bollocks! panel on page 177]. Get 64 Meg and slap a six-Gig hard drive in there as well. For 3D games, a Voodoo2 3D card will suffice [with a minimum of 4Mb on board]. As far as CD-ROM drives go, the fast ones aren't really necessary – a 16-speed is perfectly adequate. As for sound cards, any Soundblaster-compatible card will do. Finally, get a modem as well – it's pretty much mandatory these days with the arrival of online gaming."

NUMBER CRUNCHING

The above set-up can cost anywhere between £999 and £1500. Which raises the thorny question: why such a price difference for seemingly the same kit? For those with ultra-low prices, you may find that

they have a cheap and nasty case, a tacky keyboard, a rropy motherboard which won't offer the same speed as a more expensive one, or a cruddy modem. For example, you can pick up a 17-inch monitor for as little as £120, but don't expect the picture quality to look much when compared to one costing 400-odd quid.

More importantly though, in the long term a higher price usually means that the after-sales care and warranty will be of a higher quality: "As a rule, it's best not to go with systems that have a £400-£500 price tag," offers Nick, "because you have to wonder how much customer support they're really going to offer if anything goes



Companies like Evesham have nationwide showrooms so punters can test-drive their PCs.



➔ While the latest version of Windows has yet to make a real splash on gaming, make sure your new PC comes with it so you're prepared for future titles.

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1.44MB Floppy Drive
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Cherry Win 95 Keyboard
Logitech Pilot Mouse+
ATX Mid Tower case
Windows 98
Diamond 56K V90 Int. Modem
Soundblaster PCI-64
Labtec 1014 speakers

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◆ Intel PII-333 CA	£909.--
◆ Intel PII-333	£932.--
◆ Intel PII-350	£959.--
◆ Intel PII-400	£1094.--
◆ Intel PII-450	£1249.--

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ABIT BH6 PII Mainboard
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Seagate 4.3GB 7200rpm HD
Teac 32 Speed CD ROM
1.44MB Floppy Drive
Matrox G200 8MB VGA
3Dfx Voodoo2 12MB
Daewoo 15" SVGA Monitor
Cherry Win 95 Keyboard
Logitech Pilot Mouse+
ATX Mid Tower case
Windows 98
Diamond 56K V90 Int. Modem
Soundblaster PCI-128 soundcard
Labtec 2612 speakers (inc SubW)

◆ Intel PII-300 CA	£1019.--
◆ Intel PII-333 CA	£1035.--
◆ Intel PII-333	£1058.--
◆ Intel PII-350	£1085.--
◆ Intel PII-400	£1220.--
◆ Intel PII-450	£1376.--

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ABIT BH6 PII Mainboard
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Seagate 6.5GB 7200rpm HD
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Matrox DVD Mpeg2 decoder
SLI (2x) 3Dfx Voodoo2 12MB
Daewoo 15" SVGA Monitor
Cherry Win 95 Keyboard
Logitech Pilot Mouse+
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PCWorks 4Point surround Spkr

◆ Intel PII-300 CA	£1458.--
◆ Intel PII-333 CA	£1475.--
◆ Intel PII-333	£1497.--
◆ Intel PII-350	£1523.--
◆ Intel PII-400	£1652.--
◆ Intel PII-450	£1800.--

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Daewoo 17"	£86.--
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Sony 19"	£378.--
Sony 21"	£807.--

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4.3GB to 6.5GB	£30.--
4.3GB to 10.1GB	£92.--
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BARGAIN BASEMENT

While using mail order and high street shops for locating a particular piece of kit are the most obvious ports of call, there are other options available for locating both new and second-hand gear...



COMPUTER FAIRS INFORMATION

The Computer Fairs site at www.computerfairs.co.uk/.

COMPUTER FAIRS

The downside: you find some of the most smelly, geeky, boring, nerdy tech-heads at computer fairs. The upside: have your wits about you and you can land yourself a bargain. While you can pick up an entire PC system, computer fairs are more suited for hunting down those hard-to-find bits and pieces such as mounting posts (layman's guide: the little things that the motherboard slots into) or even the right screws to fit into your computer case.

Usually held every week all over the country, computer fairs are real *Only Fools And Horses* territory – prices are low, haggling rampant, but most punters

“Go round the fair at least once to see everything – you can often find the same bit of kit at one stall for half the price at another”

shy away from them. After all, there's a very real threat that you could be taken for a ride. Use the following guide to minimise the risk:

- ★ Go to a particular fair three weeks in a row and see if a stall you're interested in buying from is there each week. If so, there's less chance that they're a one-week wonder out to make a quick buck and screw you over in the process.
- ★ Always go with the exact specs of your current machine so you can explain exactly what you want.
- ★ If an item you buy doesn't work, you have the right to take it back under the Sale Of Goods Act 1994.





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Be sure to check out the Micro Computer Mart homepage www.microcomputermart.co.uk for second-hand deals.

★ Go round the fair at least once to see everything – you can often find the same bit of kit at one stall for half the price at another. Also haggle like hell and pay with cash – the retailer will sometimes knock off the VAT for your troubles.

★ If you're buying big (which we don't recommend), get a warranty with the seller's address, phone number and signature on it.

★ Any stuff marked up 'sold as seen' or 'not tested' probably doesn't work, so avoid it (unless you can cannibalise it for parts).

★ If all else fails, shout out "I'm calling the Trading Standards, you thieving w**kers". That should be enough to scare the shit out of the fair's organisers and get a result.

For more details on computer fairs, check out the rather good Computer Fairs homepage (www.computerfairs.co.uk/) which keeps updated lists of events and venues. Since April 1997 they've listed more than 1900 events.

AUCTIONS

Like computer fairs, auctions are another nationwide pastime. At decent ones, all the lots are set out before bidding begins and you (or a techie mate) can take a good look at a PC to make sure it's the real deal and not some dog in a Caprice bikini (*Eh? – Ed*). Also, events such as those held by the bods at National Computer Auctions and Morgan Auctions Online (www.morgan-auction.co.uk/) offer a seven-day warranty – ie it turns up on your doorstep on Friday and you have a week to make sure that it isn't faulty. If it is faulty, send it back.

Many PCs also come with a one-year warranty, but be sure to fully check the small print before parting with your cash.

★ Call Nationwide Computer Auctions for more details on their fortnightly auctions. They usually have about 1500 products up for bidding. Drop them a line on 01376 503 888 to get your hands on their latest catalogue.

★ For more auction news in general, try subscribing to Government Auction News, a monthly guide to all sorts of equipment that the likes of HM Customs & Exercise, the police, Transport Department and more want to sell off quickly. Fax: 0181 597 4040.



Morgan Auctions

Home | How It Works | General Questions | Technical Questions

Browse the Lots | Register to Bid | Fantasy Auction

Auction Closed The auction is now closed. The next Auction will commence on 23 October 1998

The winners from the last auction are shown below. If your username is on this list, congratulations! We will be contacting you shortly to arrange payment and delivery. If you have any queries regarding this or the last auction, please [contact us](mailto:info@orga.co.uk).

Product Description	Username
Lot No. 6320 FUJITSU JOYRITER	chris2450
Lot No. 6321 NEC PAPERTRIP RIBBONS	dando1239
Lot No. 6322 PFI WINDOW WORKS	Tony5644
Lot No. 6323 LOGITECH TRACKMAN	PattyM305
Lot No. 6324 PACE 33.6 PCMCIA MODEM	PattyM305
Lot No. 6325 HARVARD GRAPHICS - QTY 2	Jacqui7991

Auctions made easy – browse the goods being offered for sale from the comfort of your own home.

← wrong – probably not much if they're only making a five per cent margin. The worse thing is people who don't know what they're doing going out and buying purely on price. They find they don't get any support, manuals and so on. It can often end up being disastrous for the consumer."

Another conundrum for customers is whether to buy via mail order or go to a high street shop. The answer is simple: go for mail order because it's usually cheaper. Dixons offer a spec similar to the one we've just detailed for about £1500, whereas a

“If a system seems too good to be true in relation to the asking price, it probably is”

mail order company like Mesh offer a similar spec machine for under £1300. Understandably though, punters still feel a little weary of splashing out large wads of cash on something they won't see until it lands on their doorstep. While some companies have no-quibble money-back offers – such as

Dan (14 days, to be precise) – most of us still feel happier to combine the luxury of giving it a whirl in a showroom and then getting the full benefits of mail order prices.

Mail order companies though, like Evesham Micros, Time and Tiny, have

nationwide showrooms which offer the best of both worlds – go in, play around, watch that copy of *Half-Life* fly across the screen, tweak and change your spec, and then order the PC. A few days later and, hey presto, it arrives at your door.

Ultimately, whichever way you decide to splash out, always remember the golden rule: you get exactly what you pay for. If a system seems too good to be true in relation to the asking price, then it probably is. **PCZ**

★ Thinking of buying a PC? Check out www.fsyes.demon.co.uk





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MAKE IT A 3D XMAS!



10 Pace 3D Edge graphics cards up for grabs!

In conjunction with Pace, we're giving ten lucky readers the chance to win a cutting-edge 3D card in time for Christmas, so all those brand-spanking new PC games on your 'most wanted' list to Santa are guaranteed to run like a dream.

The new Pace 3D Edge accelerator cards are based on 3Dfx's Voodoo Banshee chipset, which is actually just as fast as the Voodoo2, and backwardly compatible with all other 3Dfx hardware (which ensures that pretty much every game supporting 3D acceleration will work with this card). On top of that, 16Mb of on-board Synchronous Graphics RAM ensures that the Pace 3D Edge is more than capable of muscling straight in with the big boys. It's even got a 'TV Out' socket, which is well posh. No messing.

So, do you like the sound of that? You do? And you'd like to try your hand at winning one? Okay, just answer the following question and complete the tie-breaker to enter the draw.

★ *Note: the Pace 3D Edge requires Pentium II and AGP for optimum performance.*

QUESTION: In computer graphics terms, what does VGA stand for?

TIE-BREAKER: Write a humorous limerick* about a 3D accelerator card.

* *For those of you who don't know, a limerick is a five-line poem with a rhyming scheme.*

Just answer the question and tie-breaker and send them on a postcard, along with with all the information requested, to the address below.

★ *Name / Address / Postcode / Daytime phone number / Email / Job title / Company name / Age if under 18*

★ *Please tell us if you do not wish to receive details of further special offers or new products from other companies*

★ *Are you a current subscriber to PC ZONE?*

Send your entry to: 'Screaming like a Banshee' Competition CPCZ9813A, PC ZONE, Customer Interface, Bradley Pavillons, Bradley Stoke North, Bristol BS12 0BQ, UK. The closing date is Friday 11 December 1998.

★ *Terms and conditions: Only entries with all the questions completed and received before the closing date will be entered into the prize draw. Winners will be notified by post. No cash alternative. Prizes not necessarily as shown. No correspondence will be entered into. The Editor's decision is final. All the other usual competition rules, conditions and restrictions apply. And all that. Phew!*



WATCHDOG

Complained? Argued? Shouted? And yet still feeling ignored by the industry you support? Relax. Let **PC ZONE** take care of your consumer woes

★ ANSWERED BY Adam Phillips

DOH!

We're here to help. If you've got a consumer issue that needs addressing then drop us a line. But please remember that technical issues are not covered by Watchdog – If you've got a techie problem, write to Dear Wazza (page 173).

WRITE TO Watchdog, **PC ZONE**, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ.

EMAIL us at letters.pczone@dennis.co.uk with the subject heading 'Watchdog'.

“Due to Wireplay's choice of venue (a nightclub) for the Quakeadefica final, none of us on Wireplay who are under 18 years old can play”

ROBERT DEVINE

MAD AT MCRAE

Q I've got a problem with *Colin McRae Rally* – a game which I've spent months waiting for.

According to a trusty source, the only reason that this game didn't ship earlier is because Codemasters have been taking money from Sony to keep it as an exclusive PlayStation licence. Allegedly it was originally due to be released after one month of PlayStation exclusivity, but Sony have been plying Codemasters with more and more money to keep the game from being released on the PC.

This is *really* annoying – I could understand if the PlayStation actually had the power to rival modern PCs, but with 3D acceleration and dedicated sound cards the PlayStation doesn't stand a chance. Which begs the question: why the delay? Unfortunately, I can see Codemasters quite happily taking the money.

But chances are that I might not even bother to buy the game

now – every bloomin' weekend for the past three months I've been into town (a 12-mile round trip) and pestered various retailers, who've always told me it was due in a “couple of weeks”. Believe me, after the first three times the wait became a chore.

Ross Machray

A Harsh allegations indeed. So we went along to Richard Eddy at Codemasters to see if there was any truth in what you've been told by your ‘Deep Throat’.

“First off, there's never, ever been any question of Sony exclusivity,” shot back Richard. “That's not why the PC edition of *Colin McRae Rally* ran over schedule. Your trusty source isn't either of those things – trusty nor a source – so don't believe a word of it.

“Both versions of *Colin McRae Rally* were due to be published in May, so in the first instance they were both delayed. Thankfully, the original May launch date

wasn't officially announced outside of Codemasters, and when it became apparent that more time was required, the launch date was set for mid-July – which the PlayStation code achieved.

“So, as you ask, why? Because Codemasters don't let imperfect code out the door. Not for anyone. Not even if a million punters are waving wads of cash at them. Hey, if Codemasters just wanted to be solely commercial about it, a *Colin McRae Rally* could have been released in July. You wouldn't have liked it though: it wouldn't have had all the stages of the PlayStation version; not all the cards would have worked with it; there would have been graphical glitches and imperfect AI – do you want that? No, of course you don't.

“When the PC version of *Colin McRae Rally* missed the July date, a new date was announced – September 25. Retail was informed, games magazines were told, and that was the target. Finally, a couple of graphic card incompatibility problems held the final testing stage up and the 25th came and went – which was disappointing. So, a couple of weeks later, *Colin McRae Rally* was published on the PC on October 9. Sales already indicate it's the most successful PC racing game of the year.

“In the end, we're sorry for the delay but we're not apologising for making sure that the game was everything it deserved to be. Street dates can wait.

“We hope you made that trip to town and have since enjoyed the game. The team sweated blood and worked too hard for their health to make it the finest rally game on the PC.

“On a final note, as PC software is prone to slippage, take a tip from me: use the retailer pre-order system. Go in, say what you're after, stick down a deposit and get 'em to

call you when it's in.”

You can't argue with that. However, we've had even more complaints since, regarding the final version that's been released. “Codemasters don't let imperfect code out the door”? The story continues next month.

OVER-18S ONLY

Q I am writing to complain about how Wireplay has excluded under 18s from its Quakeadefica competition. Due to the unwillingness of the compo's sponsors to pay for an over-18 to accompany someone under 18 to the final in London, and Wireplay's choice of venue (a nightclub) for the Quakeadefica final, none of us on Wireplay who are under 18 years old can enter.

This means a few very good players are missing the opportunity to have some fun and win loads of prizes. *Quake II* – the game featured in *Quakeadefica* – has a recommended age rating of 15+, so legally anyone can buy and play it, therefore we should not be excluded from a competition involving the game. We are Wireplay's customers of the future, so we should be treated as equals.

Robert Devine

A Your comments were duly dispatched to Wireplay, and marketing manager James Kaye explained the situation: “Wireplay recognises and values its under-18 users. We discussed (at length) whether to make it 16-plus or 18-plus, but two issues ultimately decided it for us:

“Firstly, The Ministry Of Sound was the perfect venue for an event of this nature. It was very, very hard to find anywhere else that fulfilled all our requirements. By law, though, they cannot allow under-18s in as they are serving drinks etc.

“Secondly, the ultimate UK winner will go to New York. It is far more likely that people over 18 can travel to the US alone, unchaperoned, and, furthermore, it is likely that



Colin McRae Rally: shame it isn't as fast hitting the racks as the cars are on the tracks, says Ross Machray.

COMING NEXT ISSUE BLOOD 2



people over 18 are not at school, and that the date of the trip (which is in November) would conflict with school and college for many under-18s.

"Ultimately, we are sorry if we looked like we were discriminating, but we simply arrived at what we considered to be the best decision."

(Read our Quakeadelaica report on page 204.)

SELF-RIGHTEOUS

Q I purchased the Orchid Righteous 2 card about a month ago. The box and card advertisements stated that you'd receive *Jedi Knight (Ambush At Altir 5)*, *G-Police*, *Battlezone* and *Incoming*. I returned home with the card and installed the bundle's best game – *Jedi Knight*. I played through three levels, only to find out that it was a demo!

I wrote to Orchid well over three weeks ago and have still to hear back from them. Could you please see if you get an answer?

David Leather

A The makers of the Orchid card told Watchdog that

Jedi Knight (Ambush At Altir 5) is indeed a three-level version of *Jedi Knight*. Orchid claim that they have never advertised that it was the full version, and if they do ever include a full game with a pack they make it clear on all documentation.

"I apologise for any inconvenience and confusion your reader has had relating to the product," offered a spokesperson. "We have taken on board the comments made and will ensure clearer explanations in future."

As for not replying to your original letter, Orchid were recently taken over by Diamond Multimedia, and there's a fair chance that your letter got lost in transit. Again Diamond apologise for this.

UNREAL SUPPORT #2

Q With reference to the letter from David Saunders regarding *Unreal* support (PCZ #68), I too experienced exactly the same problem – the game just hanging up and refusing to start.

I also spent many an hour on the support line – firstly to get my reference number and then queuing to speak to the experts.

I also have a Cyrix chip 6X86MX 300 with 64Mb RAM, an ATI 3D Rage II graphics chip with 4Mb RAM, and a Creative Vibra 16 sound card. My PC is a production line model supplied by TIME, so the problem will be the same for thousands of users.

The technical experts suggested I download the latest Direct 6 drivers from Microsoft. I did this. No joy. They then suggested the latest ATI drivers. I did this. And? No joy. Then the v.202 and v.209 patches on their website – yet again no joy. So I'm afraid your supplied patch (PCZ #68 cover CD), while welcome, didn't work for me.

I emailed them with the tech spec of my machine and gave them a copy of the log file and some of the error messages I got. I received an automatic email response saying that reloading the game sometimes helps. It doesn't. I responded with a request that a real person answer my email with an indication of what they were going to do to get my version of *Unreal* working.

To date I have heard nothing from GTI, the game's publishers, and am still waiting. I bought the game late in June, and some three months later have still not been able to play it. If they think I'm shelling out for *Duke Nukem 4 Ever* that boasts the same engine, they have lost the plot.

Graeme Baillie

A Watchdog contacted Bob Foscolo, director of GTI's National Tech Support in the US, about the problems you've been experiencing with *Unreal*. One of his colleagues should have been in touch with you by now and hopefully dealt with your complaint.

In the meantime, GTI claim that *Unreal* "has no inherent problems with your hardware" as far as they know. But Watchdog wonders whether there may be an "inherent problem" with the game's support of the Cyrix processor, considering that David Saunders experienced seemingly similar difficulties (PCZ #68). Bearing this in mind, we'd like to hear from anyone else who's had the same kind of technical headaches with the game.

In the meantime, please find the latest *Unreal* patch (v.217) on the cover CD. Let us know how it goes, Graeme. [W]

BITES & PIECES

Q About the Creative Labs Voodoo2 and the so-called full version of *Incoming* featured in PCZ #67's Watchdog. I phoned up Creative and told them that their selection of demos was wholly unsatisfactory (read 'crap'), and they sent me a brand new version of *Incoming*. Oh, joy!

Jeremy Clarkson

A Ah, punter power! It's always worth phoning up the object of your consumer frustration and having a go. It can sometimes pay off big-time.

● Serious wrist-slapping this month at Watchdog HQ when several readers pointed out that you don't need a second copy of *Total Annihilation* to multiplayer with a mate (see Martin Porter's letter in PCZ #69). Perhaps it's unforgivable that we didn't spot the cock up, but we were printing the info given to us by the game's publishers, GTI.

Perhaps more importantly though, the reader who complained still ended up with a free copy of the game for his mate. Which just goes to show that complaining when you've got nothing to complain about can still be beneficial.



The interminable search for the definitive 3D shoot 'em up continues. With *Half-Life* (reviewed this issue on page 88) currently leading the pack by a considerable margin, *Blood 2* is warming up and preparing to deliver a killer punch with its inimitable brand of blood-soaked, action-packed carnage. We'll be reviewing this highly anticipated sequel in detail next month. Don't miss it.

THE FINEST COVER CD DEMOS

If all goes according to plan we'll be bringing you exclusive demos of *Blood 2*, *Thief*, *Actua Soccer 3*, and *Klingon: Honour Guard*, though in the case of the latter we seriously advise you not to hold your breath. There will of course be lots more on the CD for your gaming pleasure.

HONEST REVIEWS

The Christmas season looms. All the big publishers will be unveiling the titles that they hope will top the Christmas charts. Main contenders for next month are: *Tomb Raider 3*, *Actua Soccer 3*, *World War 2 Fighters*, *Settlers 3* and *TOCA 2*. All of them will come under the ZONE microscope, and you can count on us to give you our honest opinion as to what's worth shelling out your hard-earned cash for, and which titles should be avoided at all costs (there are always a few).

TIPS, CHEATS AND WALKTHROUGHS

We'll have an exclusive guide to Activision's fantastic shoot 'em up *Sin* (PCZ #70, 91%), and the full low-down on the dos and don'ts in EA's seminal *Populous 3* (PCZ #70, 92%). We'll also have more tips and cheats on the latest games than you can shake a very large stick at.

INSIGHTFUL PREVIEWS

We talk to the team behind MicroProse's arcade flight sim *Top Gun 2: Hornet's Nest*, which is nearing the end of its development phase. We also check out the crazy dudes responsible for Interplay's highly promising swear 'em up *Kingpin* (see this month's First Encounter on page 65), and taking an early look at *Resident Evil 2* for PC.

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* Note: this is a guide only, content may change due to circumstances beyond our control

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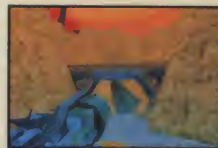
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TOP 100

Welcome to the **PC ZONE** Top 100. Here you'll find the games that in our expert opinion are the current top PC games in their field, as well as a few extras you might like to consider if you're a big fan of the genre

ACTION GAMES



QUAKE II

PCZ #59 • 97%

★ The sequel to 'the most important PC game ever' turns out to be more than worth the wait. Despite the odd bit of slowdown, single-player and deathmatch games are in a league of their own. As Macca concluded in his review: "*Quake II* is pretty much perfect." Buy it now.
PUBLISHER Activision • 01895 456700

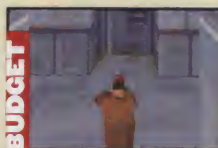


JEDI KNIGHT: DARK FORCES II

PCZ #55 • 94%

★ It's not *Quake*, but then it doesn't even try to be. But it is a compelling, technically superb blend of action and exploration neatly wrapped up in the *Star Wars* universe. Altogether most impressive.

PUBLISHER LucasArts/VIE • 0171 368 2255



FADE TO BLACK

PCZ #31 • 94%

★ The unofficial sequel to the excellent *Flashback*, this is a near-perfect blend of third-person exploration and combat action. The technical precursor to the fantastic *Tomb Raider*, it's a classic in its own right.

PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442



PRIVATEER 2: THE DARKENING

PCZ #44 • 94%

★ The ultimate mix of space combat, *Elite*-style trading and FMV action, *Privateer 2* was the first big budget release from Origin which used live action in a positive way. Absolutely packed with stars, this is pukka stuff.

PUBLISHER Origin/EA • 01753 549442



TIE FIGHTER

PCZ #18 • 94%

★ *TIE Fighter* is still rated by many as the finest space combat sim ever to be released. It succeeds because it successfully blends all the kudos of *Star Wars* with a wicked new engine for super-fast TIE on X-Wing fistcuffs.

PUBLISHER LucasArts/VIE • 0171 368 2255



TOMB RAIDER II

PCZ #57 • 94%

★ The first game broke the mould, but the sequel even improves on the original. *Tomb Raider II* sports a curvier Lara, massive new levels to explore and a tidier control system. The game comes with native 3Dfx support and looks better than ever.

PUBLISHER Core/Eidos • 0181 636 3000

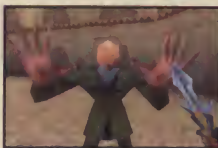


FORSAKEN

PCZ #63 • 94%

★ *Descent* is dead and *Forsaken* is now king of the tunnel-based shoot 'em ups. With huge, varied levels, heaps of graphical effects, weapons and a fantastic multiplayer LAN-based game, it's up there with the best of 'em.

PUBLISHER Acclaim • 0171 344 5000



KLINGON: HONOUR GUARD

PCZ #68 • 94%

★ At last, the *Star Trek* universe gets its first decent game with this 3D shoot 'em up. Not only that, but it's also a *Quake* clone, using the *Unreal* engine. And it's better than *Unreal*. And it's got Klingons in it, and everything. And lots of cool weapons.

PUBLISHER MicroProse • 01454 893893



SIN

PCZ #70 • 91%

NEW ENTRY Until *Duke 4Ever* appears, *Sin* is the closest in feel to its ageing classic predecessor.

Based on the *Quake II* engine, *Sin* offers a superb single-player game thanks to some ingenious level design. Highly recommended.

PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive • 0181 636 3000



INCOMING

PCZ #63 • 90%

★ *Rage*'s awesome all-action arcade epic is quite possibly the best-looking action game we've seen this year. If you've got the hardware and want to get your hands on non-stop action and a dose of strategy, this is a must-buy.

PUBLISHER Rage • 0121 452 8400

ALSO CONSIDER

V2000 Grolier Interactive • PCZ #69 • 92%

TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX Take 2 • PCZ #69 • 89%

UNREAL GT Interactive • PCZ #65 • 93%

QUAKE Activision • PCZ #43 • 96% **BUDGET**

SPEC OPS: RANGERS ASSAULT Take 2 • PCZ #65 • 88%

JEDI KNIGHT: MYSTERIES OF THE SITH LucasArts • PCZ #62 • 95%

MDK Interplay • PCZ #50 • 90%

LAST BRONX Sega • PCZ #62 • 87%

RACING GAMES**CARMAGEDDON II** **PCZ #69 • 95%**

★ It's *that* game again, this time with full 3D pedestrians. More blood, more cars, more tracks – and now with added missions. If you liked the first one, you'll love this one. If you don't, you can just bog off.

PUBLISHER SCI • 0171 585 3308

**FORMULA 1 GRAND PRIX 2** **PCZ #36 • 95%**

★ The amazing sequel to the greatest F1 driving sim ever. Updated brilliantly for the 94/95 season with all-new detailed circuits, cars and teams. The game will run on a 486DX2 but you'll need a Pentium to run the hi-res mode.

PUBLISHER MicroProse • 01454 893893

**COLIN MCRAE RALLY** **PCZ #68 • 93%**

★ Sporting an updated *TOCA* engine, *Colin McRae* has become the new benchmark in rally simulations. With car customisability and a heap of multiplayer accessibility, this game should be top of everyone's rally games heap.

PUBLISHER Codemasters • 01926 814132

**MONACO GRAND PRIX** **PCZ #69 • 92%**

★ Essentially this is *F1 Racing Simulation 2*, and an F1 fan's wet dream come true. It looks beautiful, plays even better, and the AI is second to none. You need a hefty machine to have it looking its best though.

PUBLISHER Ubi Soft • 081 944 9000

**GRAND THEFT AUTO** **PCZ #58 • 92%**

★ This is the game that took over from *Carmageddon* as the media's favourite pet hate. Steal cars, dodge police, mow down pedestrians and cause mayhem in city streets in one of the most addictive driving games ever. *Micro Machines* on acid.

PUBLISHER BMG • 0171 973 0011

**NEED FOR SPEED III** **PCZ #69 • 91%**

★ Some arcade racing games are fun, but if you like a bit more than just just racing around a few tracks then you should seriously consider *Need For Speed III*. Why? Because if avoiding the law isn't fun, what is?

PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442

**MOTOCROSS MADNESS** **PCZ #67 • 91%**

★ An astoundingly addictive game. Loads of game and race options and tremendous fun, especially when played with a Microsoft Freestyle Pro pad over a network. Soon available with the pad for around 50 quid. A must-buy.

PUBLISHER Microsoft • 0345 002000

**MICRO MACHINES 3** **PCZ #64 • 90%**

★ The manic miniature racing game gets the 3D treatment and loses nothing along the way. The new power-ups might not please the purist, but *Micro Machines 3* is still one of the finest two-player games around.

PUBLISHER Codemasters • 01926 814132

**MOTORHEAD** **PCZ #63 • 90%**

★ With drop-dead graphics and a blistering frame rate, this is a ridiculously fast, fab-looking, intense racing experience. Add a great LAN-based option (Local Area Network) and *Motorhead* is the ace of arcade racers.

PUBLISHER Gremlin Interactive • 0114 273 8601

**GRAND PRIX LEGENDS** **PCZ #69 • 90%**

★ Papyrus, the makers of *NASCAR* and *IndyCar*, have put the danger back into Formula 1. If you fancy a challenge and the chance to go back to the teams and drivers of 1967, then buy this. You'll need a steering wheel though.

PUBLISHER Sierra • 0118 920 9100

ALSO CONSIDER

INDYCAR 2 Cendant • PCZ #34 • 90% **BUDGET**
SCREAMER 2 Virgin • PCZ #45 • 93% **BUDGET**
DESTRUCTION DERBY 2 Psygnosis • PCZ #46 • 86% **BUDGET**
INTERSTATE 76: NITRO RIDERS Activision • PCZ #63 • 87%
TOCA: TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP Europress • PCZ #59 • 86%
ULTIMATE RACE PRO MicroProse • PCZ #62 • 88%

SPORTS GAMES**LINKS LS** **PCZ #43 • 94%**

★ The classic golf sim gets an update, and unsurprisingly it's fab. There's more options, luscious graphics, a redesigned menu and a view selection system. There's even a built-in upgrader for all the old data disk courses you splashed out on.

PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive • 0181 636 3000

**TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR GOLF** **PCZ #69 • 93%**

★ Beautifully presented, as always, and sporting a speedy enhanced graphics engine, this latest in the *PGA* series also gets star endorsement by young Tiger Woods. Without question, this is the best golf game yet.

PUBLISHER EA Sports • 01753 549442

**NHL 99** **PCZ #70 • 92%**

NEW ENTRY The problem with all ice hockey games is the confusion that ensues after each ruck. *NHL 99* is no different in that respect, but updated graphics, enhanced AI and spiffy presentation make this game a must for fans of the sport.

PUBLISHER EA Sports • 01753 549442

**PETE SAMPRAS TENNIS 97** **PCZ #53 • 92%**

★ This game doesn't quite better *Super Tennis* on the SNES, but it's as close as you'll get on the PC. The simple control system means it's instantly playable, but we may as well tell you now that the women's skirts still don't fly up when they serve.

PUBLISHER Codemasters • 01926 814132

**WORLD CUP 98** **PCZ #65 • 91%**

★ The best football game available for the PC. Graphics and detail to die for, a creative control system that allows for awesome moves and goals, extremely competent AI and excellent presentation make this a must-have, even though it lacks a custom tournament mode.

PUBLISHER EA Sports • 01753 549442

**SENSIBLE SOCCER EUROPEAN CLUB EDITION** **PCZ #69 • 90%**

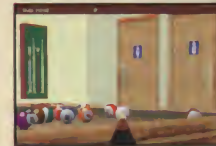
★ It's still top-down, and it's still simple, fast and fun. *World Cup '98* may be prettier, but it can only dream of being as instantly playable as *Sensible Soccer European Club Edition*.

PUBLISHER GT Interactive • 0171 258 3791

**NBA LIVE 98** **PCZ #60 • 90%**

★ With even better graphics and commentary than before, it's one of the best-looking PC sports games. This version sports 'realistic' faces and players of different heights – it's by far the best basketball game available.

PUBLISHER EA Sports • 01753 549442

**VIRTUAL POOL 2** **PCZ #58 • 90%**

★ Okay, so *Virtual Pool 2* scored one per cent less than its predecessor, but this follow-up beats it hands down. 3Dfx support goes some way to pushing the series further, and the inclusion of English Pub rules make it a more essential purchase than before.

PUBLISHER Interplay • 01628 423666

**ACTUA SOCCER 2** **PCZ #59 • 90%**

★ Instantly accessible footie action in this latest instalment of Gremlin's high profile *Actua* series. Great graphics, easy control and a hidden Super Furry Animals team confirm *Actua 2*'s 'must have' status.

PUBLISHER Gremlin Interactive • 0114 273 8601

**THE GOLF PRO** **PCZ #62 • 90%**

★ If you're bored with either *PGA* or *Links*, then this is the best of the 'mouse-swing' bunch. Good course design and some excellent tuition means there's loads of gameplay, though the putting lets it down a tad.

PUBLISHER Empire Interactive • 0181 343 7337

ALSO CONSIDER

★ There's always a swell of different sports game types depending on the current sporting season. These are worth having a look at...
JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL Virgin Interactive • PCZ #68 • 88%
MADDEN NFL 98 EA Sports • PCZ #59 • 87%
TRIPLE PLAY 99 Electronic Arts • PCZ #64 • 90%
TROPHY BASS 2 Cendant • PCZ #50 • 84%

ADVENTURE GAMES



ALONE IN THE DARK 3 **PCZ #21 • 95%**
 ★ Better than the previous *AITD* instalments, *Alone 3* is a tense, ambient tale of Navajo Indian magic and reincarnation that unfolds in the usual *AITD* manner. This is now available as part of a compilation budget pack.
PUBLISHER Infogrames • 0181 738 8199



BIOFORGE **PCZ #25 • 95%**
 ★ Futuristic *Alone In The Dark*-style game with impressive graphics, puzzles and soundtrack. Often preferred over *AITD* games as its unique blend of arcade combat is explosive. The only drag is EA's refusal to make a sequel for it.
PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442



SYSTEM SHOCK **PCZ #20 • 95%**
 ★ This futuristic first-person cyberpunk adventure from the makers of *Ultima* was initially overlooked by many people. Now available on budget, this is a must-buy for those new to the genre. The graphics might be a little dated, but the atmosphere is still invigorating.
PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442



DISC WORLD II **PCZ #44 • 93%**
 ★ Perfect Entertainment's immaculate sequel to *Discworld* follows would-be wizard Rincewind in his search for the Grim Reaper. Not as hard as the first game, but bigger and better looking. *Discworld II* is a universally appealing adventure game.
PUBLISHER Psygnosis • 0151 282 3000



INDIANA JONES AND THE FATE OF ATLANTIS **PCZ #37 • 93%**
 ★ Follow a post-*Raiders* Indy in his search for the submerged metropolis. Three ways to play make for a high replayability factor, and the inter-character banter is brilliant.
PUBLISHER LucasArts/VIE • 0171 368 2255



LBA 2: TWINSEN'S ODYSSEY **PCZ #54 • 93%**
 ★ Twinse is back – this time to thwart those pesky Esmers in this sumptuous sequel. The huge play area in *LBA 2*, coupled with seamlessly linked puzzles, creates a great-looking and hugely atmospheric adventure. A must for adventure fans.
PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442



SAM & MAX **PCZ #11 • 93%**
 ★ The hilarious dog/rabbit duo's first and only PC outing, in which they need to solve a host of bizarre puzzles. An all-talkie adventure with a gag-laden script, this is an essential budget-priced purchase even if you're not a point-and-click fan.
PUBLISHER LucasArts/VIE • 0171 368 2255



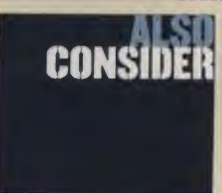
THE CURSE OF MONKEY ISLAND **PCZ #58 • 92%**
 ★ The third game in LucasArts' classic *Monkey* saga delivers the goods big-time, much to the relief of adventure fans everywhere. *The Curse Of Monkey Island* is the new benchmark for point-and-click adventure games.
PUBLISHER VIE • 0171 368 2255



STARSHIP TITANIC **PCZ #63 • 91%**
 ★ Douglas Adams' epic adventure is an innovative piece of software filled with everything that's right about adventure games. With its lush visuals and an innovative user interface, *Starship Titanic* is a must-buy for adventure fans.
PUBLISHER Zblac Entertainment • 01626 332233



ECSTATICA II **PCZ #48 • 91%**
 ★ We dubbed it "an adventure with balls". It's hard, but it's one of the most rewarding adventures we've ever seen. It constantly surprises and is sure to keep even the most battle-weary adventure fan busy for weeks.
PUBLISHER Psygnosis • 0151 282 3000



FULL THROTTLE Virgin • PCZ #27 • 92% **BUDGET**
THE PANDORA DIRECTIVE Virgin • PCZ #43 • 92%
TOONSTRUCK Virgin • PCZ #45 • 93% **BUDGET**
GABRIEL KNIGHT 2: THE BEAST WITHIN Cendant • PCZ #36 • 88%
LITTLE BIG ADVENTURE Electronic Arts • PCZ #21 • 93% **BUDGET**

ROLE-PLAYING GAMES



ULTIMA UNDERWORLD 2: LABYRINTH OF WORLDS **PCZ #1 • 94%**
 ★ This improves on almost every aspect of its prequel, *The Stygian Abyss*. You explore a complex, ever-evolving dungeon; it has unsurpassed atmosphere and interaction.
PUBLISHER Origin/EA • 01753 549442



FINAL FANTASY VII **PCZ #66 • 93%**
 ★ Fearsomely addictive gem of a game of truly epic proportions. Great graphics, plenty of hidden surprises and massive levels will keep you totally absorbed if you forgive the risible dialogue and turn-based combat.
PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive • 0181 636 3000



REALMS OF THE HAUNTING **PCZ #47 • 93%**
 ★ Although overlooked by many fans of the genre, our Mallo gave it a whopping 93 per cent when he reviewed it back in issue 47. Still well worth a look if you happen to see it going cheap, *ROTH* is a well cool mix of adventure and RPG.
PUBLISHER Gremlin Interactive • 0114 273 8601



LANDS OF LORE: GUARDIANS OF DESTINY **PCZ #56 • 92%**
 ★ Four long years in the making, Westwood Studios' mammoth new adventure proved more than worth the wait. Sumptuous visuals and a tremendous atmosphere combine to make it an instant classic.
PUBLISHER VIE • 0171 368 2255



FALLOUT **PCZ #61 • 91%**
 ★ This surprised everyone in the office, proving to be both addictive and well conceived. Give it a chance and you'll discover that *Fallout* is a rewarding RPG which'll keep you entertained for hours. Not quite on a par with the mighty *Ultima* series, but then what is?
PUBLISHER Interplay • 01628 423666



ULTIMA VII **PCZ #3 • 89%**
 ★ Arguably the best of all the *Ultima* games, *Ultima VII* blends character interaction and the exploration of the world of Britannia. The last *Ultima* series to give complete party control. Check out the *Ultima Collection* for a real treat.
PUBLISHER Origin/EA • 01753 549442



DIABLO **PCZ #48 • 88%**
 ★ Standard hack 'n' slash fare, but pulled off with such style that it's addictive. A great storyline compensates for repetitive arcade combat and supremely detailed animation makes it a superb coffee-table game.
PUBLISHER Zblac/Blizzard • 01626 332233



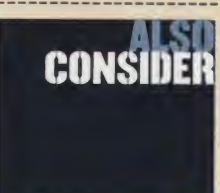
TERRIS **PCZ #44 • 88%**
 ★ A MUD in the old-school style of text-based RPGs, but it's so addictive that we're still playing it. The various quests, puzzles and monsters will keep you going for days. The gameplay is excellent, if you can handle the 'texty-ness'.
PUBLISHER AOL • 0800 279 7444



MERIDIAN 59 **PCZ #45 • 86%**
 ★ This ground-breaking on-line RPG enables thousands of people to interact with each other in the same fantasy universe at the same time. Garish and horrible graphics aside, *Meridian 59* remains one of the best online multiplayer RPGs around.
PUBLISHER 3DO Company • 0181 296 1949



ULTIMA UNDERWORLD: THE STYGIAN ABYSS **PRE-PC ZONE**
 ★ This top role-playing games away from first-person tile-based RPGs. Amazing architecture, witty characterisations, layers of storyline and the best ending of any game in history.
PUBLISHER Origin/EA • 01753 549442



★ These are the cream of the crop, largely because RPGs have taken a back seat to other game types over the last couple of years. However, also bear in mind...
DIABLO: HELLFIRE Cendant • PCZ #59 • 82%
ULTIMA COLLECTION Electronic Arts • PCZ #62 • 90%
RAVENLOFT: STONE PROPHET Mindscape • PCZ #25 • 78%

STRATEGY GAMES**SYNDICATE WARS****PCZ #43 • 95%**

One of the best strategy games of all time gets a sequel, and what a fabulous sequel it is too. *Syndicate Wars* houses a wealth of intricate levels, gorgeous graphics and enough gratuitous violence to keep anyone happy.

PUBLISHER EA/Bullfrog • 01753 549442**X-COM 3: APOCALYPSE****PCZ #52 • 95%**

A revamped engine and a healthy helping of real-time combat have brought the fantastically addictive *X-COM* series bang up to date. If you like your strategy games deep and meaningful, you should buy *X-COM 3* immediately. It'll keep you busy for weeks.

PUBLISHER MicroProse • 01454 893893**AGE OF EMPIRES****PCZ #54 • 94%**

Imagine *Civilization II*'s great empire-building gameplay improved with some excellent graphical touches and comprehensive multi and single-player options (all in real time). That's *Age Of Empires* in a nutshell.

PUBLISHER Microsoft • 0345 002000**POPULOUS: THE BEGINNING****PCZ #70 • 92%**

The original *Populous* was the game that put Bullfrog into orbit and made Peter Molyneux one of the biggest names in the industry. Now Peterless, the new Bullfrog team show that they can do just as well without him.

PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442**MAGIC & MAYHEM****PCZ #70 • 92%**

Based on the old Spectrum game *Chaos*, *X-COM* creators Mythos deliver a diverse and original fantasy strategy game. A strong single-player element and a manic multiplayer game make this a well-deserving classic.

PUBLISHER Virgin • 0171 368 2255**TOTAL ANNIHILATION****PCZ #56 • 92%**

With a ridiculous number of units and its fast-paced action, *TA* is without doubt one of the best real-time strategy games ever. The polygon units are smooth, and multiplayer games are awesome. Pisses on *Red Alert*.

PUBLISHER GT Interactive • 0171 258 3791**SIMCITY 2000****PCZ #13 • 92%**

A classic that deserves its reputation as one of the all-time greats in the strategy world. Build and maintain the city of your dreams and cope with all the problems a real-life Mayor would come up against. It's a lot more fun than it sounds, trust us.

PUBLISHER Maxis • 0171 505 1500**THE SENTINEL RETURNS****PCZ #66 • 90%**

Twelve years on, the sequel to the 'classic' Amstrad and BBC Micro strategy-fest makes a welcome return. Some may find the gameplay a tad too repetitive, but it's compelling and runs happily on a P133.

PUBLISHER Psygnosis • 0151 282 3000**CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 97/98****PCZ #57 • 90%**

The best football management game ever gets its seasonal update and a few added extras – you can now play a number of leagues simultaneously, and edit the existing stats.

PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive • 0181 636 3000**CIVILIZATION II****PCZ #36 • 90%**

Explore the world, conquer territories and research new technologies in one of the most successful strategy games ever. It's not that different to the first one, but it merits a '90s update and a place here.

PUBLISHER MicroProse • 01454 893893**ALSO CONSIDER****WARLORDS III: DARKLORDS RISING** Broderbund • PCZ #67 • 90%**OPERATIONAL ART OF WAR VOL 1** Empire • PCZ #68 • 92%**COMMANDOS** Eidos Interactive • PCZ #66 • 87%**DUNGEON KEEPER** Electronic Arts • PCZ #53 • 96%**MASTER OF ORION 2** MicroProse • PCZ #45 • 92% **BUDGET****COMMAND & CONQUER: RED ALERT** VIE • PCZ #47 • 94%**CAESAR III** Sierra • PCZ #70 • 92%**M1 TANK PLATOON II** MicroProse • PCZ #63 • 90%**FLIGHT SIMULATION GAMES****F-22 TOTAL AIR WAR****PCZ #68 • 95%**

This full-price new version of DID's masterpiece is perhaps a bit of a rip-off for anyone who already owns *F-22 ADF*, but those of you looking to buy one of the greatest combat sims of recent years should seriously consider this one.

PUBLISHER Ocean/DID • 0161 832 6633**FLIGHT SIM 98****PCZ #55 • 94%**

Another year, and yet another flight sim to come from the mighty Microsoft. However, this time, with two new aircraft, a helicopter, hundreds of new airports and hugely impressive 3D acceleration, it's really worth having.

PUBLISHER Microsoft • 0345 002000**TEAM APACHE****PCZ #65 • 93%**

A highly accessible and detailed chopper combat sim that lets you get on with the fun stuff rather than struggling with systems and an over-complex flight model. A bit vacuous for die-hard prop-heads, but as flight sims go this is one of the most fun to play.

PUBLISHER Mindscape • 01444 246333**LONGBOW 2****PCZ #59 • 92%**

Longbow 2 is challenging, beautiful, exciting and fun – if you're 3Dfx'd up," we said in our review. If you don't have any extra graphics hardware, there's only one thing to do – think 'upgrade', 'upgrade' and 'upgrade'. It'll be worth the investment.

PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442**JANE'S F-15****PCZ #64 • 92%**

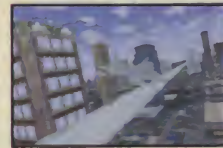
A hard-core propeller-head's sim that can stand alongside the awesome *Longbow 2* as one of the most realistic flight sims available. Newbies to the genre might find it a bit overwhelming, but it's worth persevering with.

PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442**US MARINE FIGHTERS****PCZ #30 • 92%**

Lovely graphics and a realistic enough flight model. This was originally released as a mission disk for *US Navy Fighters*, but it now comes as part of the *US Navy Fighters Gold* pack, so make sure you go get that instead!

PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442**FLYING CORPS GOLD****PCZ #59 • 92%**

Action-packed WWI flight simulation with neato graphics. Some of you may recall *Red Baron* as one of the greatest WWI flight sims ever – this improves on the old classic to become the best PC WWI sim currently available.

PUBLISHER Empire Interactive • 0181 343 7337**JETFIGHTER III****PCZ #47 • 91%**

The follow-up to one of the most popular sims ever. Fly over three and a half million square miles of accurately-mapped terrain of South America. It really is just like being there. Oh yeah, you get to shoot things too, but sadly there's no duty free option.

PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive • 0181 636 3000**A-10 CUBA!****PCZ #59 • 90%**

Functional graphics for a game that really does capture the imagination, mainly because the plane is an absolute joy to fly. Although it's slightly limited due to a lack of a fully-fledged campaign it's still great fun, as well as being pretty speedy on a modest Pentium.

PUBLISHER Activision • 01895 456700**FLIGHT UNLIMITED II****PCZ #60 • 84%**

It can't really compete with the behemoth that is *Flight Sim 98*, and as a result is somewhat limited and claustrophobic. However, it does score highly for being more detailed in its smaller area, and much more fun.

PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive • 0181 636 3000**ALSO CONSIDER**

If a flight sim is good, you can bet it'll stay on the shelves for a long time – hence our recommendation for *US Marine Fighters*. Some of the more recent releases worth considering include...

AIR WARRIOR III Interactive Magic • PCZ #62 • 80%**F-16 AGGRESSOR** Virgin • PCZ #70 • 92%**COMANCHE GOLD** NovaLogic • PCZ #65 • 87%**F/A-18 KOREA** Empire Interactive • PCZ #61 • 90%

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ON THE CD

★ WORDS Richie Shoemaker DISKMEISTER Daniel Emery

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BEFORE YOU DIAL... If you are calling either helpline, then please take note of the following points:

- ★ If possible, have your PC operating and near to the phone when you call.
- ★ If this is not possible, note down all relevant information – ie system type, sound card, RAM etc – plus the nature of the fault.
- ★ Make sure you have a pen and paper to hand when you call to jot down the relevant info.



DEMOS + SHAREWARE

MINIMUM SPECIFICATION

- ★ You'll need at least a Pentium 133 with 16Mb RAM to run the software on this month's CD-ROM.
- ★ Many of the programs on our cover CD-ROM are designed to run under Windows 95 and, as a result, some of them may require a Pentium 166 with 32Mb RAM to run satisfactorily. Please note that some games also require a 3D accelerator card to run.
- ★ Use the browser and menu system to see which demos are Windows 95, DOS and 3D accelerator only.



WARGASM

DID/Ocean

In the future all wars will be fought this way, at least according to flight sim aficionados DID. Take to the electronic battlefield and see why we all love this game so much.

Controls: Keyboard/joystick/ gamepad	SHIFT+A Call air strike
PG UP Increase fuse	Numpad 8 Camera up
PG DN Decrease fuse	Numpad 4 Left
INS/DEL Next/previous weapon	Numpad 6 Right
BACKSPACE Weapons select	Numpad 2 Down
SPACE Fire	Numpad + Zoom in
B/CONTROL Brake	Numpad - Zoom out
Home Re-centre turret	F1 Gun sight view
G Toggle gun stability	SHIFT+F1 Zoom gunsight view
T Toggle turret stability	F2 Commander view
END Turret lock	SHIFT+F2 Wide angle
A/Z Stand/crouch or climb/descend	F3 External view
P Pause	SHIFT+F3 Fixed external view
M Map	F4 Driver view
SHIFT+Q Quit	SHIFT+F4 Track view
SHIFT+O Options	F5 Weapon view
SHIFT+D Dismount infantry from APC	F6 Drive by view
	F7 Tower view
	SHIFT+F7 Aerial view
	F8 Smart view



AGE OF EMPIRES: THE RISE OF ROME

Ensemble/Microsoft

You won't need the original game to play this demo, but you will for the full version. This three-scenario demo features two new races, three new units and four new technologies from Microsoft's expansion pack.

Controls: Mouse



TOP GUN: HORNET'S NEST

MicroProse

The first Top Gun game was pretty good and this one looks set to be even better, thanks to the exclusion of Tom Cruise. Try this one-mission demo and read the preview on page 69.

Controls: Keyboard/joystick	ESC Pause/options menu
CURSORS Pitch and roll	M Auto level
BACKSPACE Toggle time compression	</> Rudder left/right
	F Flaps
	G Gear
	B/DEL Brakes
	SPACE Fire guns
	SPACE Launch from carrier
CONTROL Fire missile	
SHIFT+CONTROL Fire boresight missile	
TAB Toggle weapons mode (A-A to A-G)	

- F1-F4** Weapons hardpoint 1-4
- F5** Belly weapon (bombs)
- F6-F7** Gun ammo type 1-2
- Z/SHIFT+Z** Next/previous target
- X/SHIFT+X** Next/previous weapon
- N** Select nearest target
- C/V** Chaff/flare (PG DN for both)
- Throttle** 0%
- 1-6** Throttle 30-100%
- A/END** Afterburner
- +/-** Increase/decrease
throttle
- R** Change radar range
- T** Cycle MFD
- I** ILS Auto-land
- W/Q** Next/previous waypoint
- E** Toggle between waypoint
and target
- F8-F12** Various views
- /** Flyby view
- J** Virtual cockpit
- K/L** Snap/padlock view



POPULOUS: THE BEGINNING

Bullfrog/EA

This demo of Bullfrog's first game without Mr Molyneux features a tutorial and a full mission from the full game. Should keep you going until this classic game appears in the shops.

Controls: Mouse



RAILROAD TYCOON II

Take 2 Interactive

Two full scenarios are included in this long-awaited sequel to one of the world's best strategy

NO CD?

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★ CDs from previous issues are also available.

games. Take a look at the corresponding readme file for full instructions and tutorial.

Controls: Mouse/keyboard

+/- Increase/decrease game speed

PAUSE Pause game

F3 Toggle 8 or 16-bit colour

F4 Toggle full-screen mode

A Bring up most recent annual report

N Bring up most recent newspaper

D Bring up most recent dialogue box

T Track lay

S Station build

B Bulldoze

O Overview

P Purchase train

M Stock market

C Control panel

F File options

G Grid on/off

N Newspaper

E Expand list box

Q Quit

1 Station tab

2 Train tab

3 Player tab

4 Company tab

6 Overview resources

7 Overview stations

8 Overview grades

9 Overview traffic density

0 Overview track owner

L List screen for station, train, player or company

D Detail screen for station, train, player or company

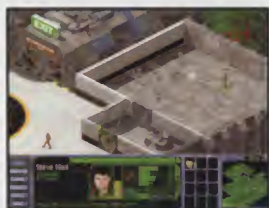
CURSORS Scroll screen



TIGER WOODS 99 EA Sports

To the cost of our own British golfers, Tiger Woods seems to have taken the sport by storm. Likewise with this version of the game compared to the latest version of *Links*. Oh well.

Controls: Mouse



ENEMY INFESTATION

Funsoft

X-COM meets *Aliens* in this futuristic real-time strategy game where the idea is to rescue the colonists overrun by alien hordes. Sound familiar?

Controls: Mouse



MICROSOFT PINBALL ARCADE

Microsoft

Play the famous Haunted House pinball table in this demo from Microsoft. You can score up to 200,000 points – after that you'll have to buy the full version.

Controls: Keyboard

CURSOR DOWN Plunger

Left/right SHIFT Flippers

A/ Additional left/right flippers

Z/? Nudge left/right

SPACE Nudge up



DELTA FORCE

NovaLogic

Want more realism in your *Quake* clones? Then look no further than NovaLogic's tactical simulation based on



TOMB RAIDER 3

Core/Eidos

Okay, so it probably isn't going to be all that different from the last two games, but that won't stop *Tomb Raider 3* from being one of the biggest titles this Christmas. Try this one-level demo and we'll make sure we have a comprehensive review next issue, on sale Tuesday 15 December.

Controls: Keyboard/gamepad/joystick

CURSORS Movement

< Duck

> Dash

SHIFT Walk

ALT Jump

CONTROL Action

SPACE Arm

/ Flare

NumPad 0 Look

END Roll

ESC Inventory



ON THE CD

EXTENDED PLAY

Get more out of the games you already own. (Also see Extended Play on page 200)

BATTLEZONE

Absolutely tons of maps for Activision's real-time strategy action game. The files extract to a temporary directory by default; read your game manual and the corresponding readme files for details on how to get these maps up and running.

QUAKE II

If you've never experienced multiplayer *Quake II*, it's probably because you haven't got a modem. Well now you don't need one, because *EraserBot* is here. This program enables you to run computer-controlled players in a variety of maps, including capture

the flag and team games. Installation is piss-easy, and setting up deathmatches is but a few clicks away.

WORMS 2

A set of programs that together enable you to edit almost any aspect of everyone's favourite annelid-based slaughter fest. Full details on how are included in each program's readme file.





ACTUA TENNIS

Actua Sports/Gremlin Interactive

Tennis is a sport you either love or loathe. *Actua Tennis* from Gremlin is certainly one of the best computer simulations we've seen in a while, and the commentary is spot on.

Controls: Gamepad/ keyboard
(user definable)
1-5 Camera view selection.
S Scoreboard view

P/ESC Pause/play on
R Replay mode
F1 Options

← one of the world's elite forces. Try the single-player mission then go online for some multiplayer mayhem on *NovaWorld*.

Controls: Keyboard/mouse
V Cycle resolution

Movement & weapons:

MOUSE Look up/down, turn left/right

CURSORS Move forward/back, sidestep left/right

Numpad 8/2 Look up/down

SHIFT Walk

DEL Stand

END Crouch

PG DN Prone

SPACE Jump

LMB Fire

RMB Scope

1 Knife

2 Colt .45 pistol

3 M4 (burst)

4 M203 (grenade launcher)

5 M4 (single shot)

M Change magazine

Views:

F2 First-person

F5 External

F6 Fixed angle

F7 Fixed location

[J] Zoom in/out

Misc:

TAB Toggle current map on/off

F1 Help screen

F3 Toggle crosshairs on/off

F4 Show gun on/off

F9 Forward observer (TAB

cycles views)

F10 Map, colour

F11 Map, contour

F12 Letterbox on/off

+/- Zoom map in/out

T Talk to all other players

ESC Exit mission



WWII FIGHTERS

Electronic Arts

Of all the WWII flight sims on the way, this one certainly looks the best. We'll just have to wait and see if it lives up to expectations.

Controls: Joystick/keyboard

Flight keys:

1 Zero throttle

2/3/4/5 Throttle 25/50/75/100%

7/8 Decrease/increase throttle

</> Rudder left/right

CURSORS Pitch and roll

World/view settings:

C/SHIFT+C Time compression fast/slow

0 Stop time

+/- Zoom in/out

F1-F10 Various views

Toggled settings:

A Autopilot toggle

SHIFT+A Air target position

ALT+A Air information

B Brakes

SHIFT+B Bail out

F Flap extend

SHIFT+F Jettison fuel

ALT+F Jettison weapons

G Landing gear

ESC Quit flight

ALT+R Revive plane

S Stability toggle

V Flap retract

W/Q Next/previous waypoint

Targeting:

H Air target (with SHIFT

for friendlies)

J Ground target (with

SHIFT for friendlies)

K Structural target (with

SHIFT for friendlies)

; Deselect target

' Central target

ENTER Next visible target

[J] Switch weapons

TAB Fire main gun

SPACE Fire secondary weapon

BACKSPACE Cockpit toggle

SHIFT+ESC In-flight menu



NHL 99

EA Sports

Play an exhibition match between the Washington Capitals and the Detroit Redwings in EA's latest and greatest ice hockey sim. 3D card not required, but if you've got one prepare for a treat.

Controls: Gamepad/keyboard

CURSORS

C Pass/face-off (change player if not in control of puck)

SPACE Shoot (hook/hold if not in control of puck)

X Speed boost

Z Special move (block shot if not in control of puck)

B Coaching pressure

A Skate backwards



ADDED EXTRAS

Here's a glimpse at some of the other added extras we've got for you on this month's free *ZONE* CD

EZDesk 1.8

Latest version of the superb desktop saving application.

FileView 2.1

Enables you to read HEX and ASCII files.

Hypersnap DX 3.21.00

Take game screenshots with this grabbing utility.

3Dfx Glide Drivers 2.43

DirectX 6.0 for

Windows 95

MS's system drivers.

DirectX 6.0 for

Windows 98

And again for Win98 users.

SciTech Display

Doctor v6.0

Graphics card playing up? Try a course of this for 30 days.

WinZip 7.0

The latest version of the Windows archiving utility.

MS Common Control Library 4.72

You need this for WinZip if Internet Explorer 4 is not installed.

Ameol 2.5

CIX online conferencing.

Kali95

Popular Net gaming software.

CompuServe 2.6a

If you still haven't got online, here's a good place to start after you plug in your new modem. Includes one month's free trial.

TimeOnLine v1.10e

Keep track of your time online.

GetRight 3.2

Cure downloading headaches.

mIRC 5.4

Net Relay Chat software.

ClaraNET

Sign up with ClaraNET.

WIREPLAY

You can blame the latest Christmas demos for the lack of any new *Quake* or *Quake II* mods this month. To make up for it though, why not try *WarGasm* online? We think you'll like it.

TIPS AND SOLUTIONS

No need to trawl your way through your back issues of *PC ZONE* for that elusive cheat or walkthrough, just run this program and you'll find what

you want in no time.

UNREAL 2.17 BETA PATCH

Some people are still having problems getting *Unreal* to run with their Cyrix processors. Hopefully this beta patch should sort things out and get things running smoothly.

CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER UPDATE

Update your 97/98 season to 98/99 with this home-grown patch from Darren Noyce. You'll need the update patch to get the full benefit, which you can find at www.dazsoft.demon.co.uk.

FLOPPY VERSION

Floppy disks don't hold as much stuff as CDs. If you've got the floppy disk version of *PC ZONE*, here's what's on offer

WALL STREET TRADER

Shareware

See what it's like to spend billions of other people's money in this stock market sim. Bet you find it pretty boring.

Controls: Mouse

STARMADA

Shareware

If anything's going to make you give in and buy a CD-ROM drive it's this strategy game. We played it for three seconds before our floppy disk drive packed in.

Controls: Mouse

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MiG-29

NovaLogic

At last NovaLogic seem to have embraced 3D technology; not that you'll need a 3D card to play this one-mission demo featuring Russia's hi-tech jet fighter. Multiplayer games are also accessible via NovaWorld.

Controls: Joystick/keyboard/mouse

Aircraft control:

CURSORS Pitch and roll

DEL/PG DN Rudder left/right

B Brakes

F Flaps up/down

G Gear up/down

Targeting:

ENTER Create shoot list

TAB Next target

[/] Cycle targets up/down

' Boresight target

Weapons:

Z Fire cannon

SPACE Fire selected weapon

' Select next weapon

1 Deselect weapon

2 Select cannon

3 Select medium-range AAM

4 Select short-range AAM

CONTROL+1 Select medium-range AGM

CONTROL+2 Select short-range AGM

CONTROL+3 Select bombs

CONTROL+4 Select fuel pod

F1-F8 and Number pad keys

Various views

Numpad keys Avionics

Engines:

5 Engines off

6 Throttle idle

7/8/9 Throttle to 25/50/75%

0 Full Throttle

BACKSPACE Afterburner

-/+ Throttle up/down

Miscellaneous:

ESC Abort mission

L Auto level

CONTROL+J Eject

END End mission

</> HUD brighter/darken

F9 HUD on/off

CONTROL+Z Jettison stores

C/F Launch chaff/flare

M Mission goals

N Next waypoint

Y Recent messages

F12 Time compression

W Wingman commands

Multiplayer:

T Chat

CONTROL+T Squadron chat

P Player list

K Score



RED BARON II

Sierra

Although this a multiplayer demo, you do have the opportunity to fly solo against various ground targets, which, considering this is WWI, is probably the most fun.

Controls: Joystick/keyboard

SPACE Fire machine guns

U Un-jam guns

B Drop bomb

R Fire rocket

1-0 Set throttle 10-100%

-/+ Decrease/increase throttle

ESC Bring up dialogue box

TAB Turn engine on/off

Flying:

CURSORS Pitch and roll

/ Move rudder left/right

. Centre rudder

Chatting:

BACKSPACE Start chat message

ENTER Send chat message

CONTROL+PG UP/PG DN

Scroll chat messages up or down

Views:

F1-F11, Numpad keys Various views

Numpad 0 Map

Z/X Zoom in/out

Selecting targets:

N Select next plane

F Select next friendly

E Select next enemy

D Select next dogfight target

T Select next threat

L Select next landmark

0 Select target in gunsight

Autopilot:

SHIFT+A Turn straight and level

autopilot on

ALT+A Turn circling autopilot on

A Turn autopilot off

Miscellaneous:

P Toggle pause

SHIFT+D Toggle status display

SHIFT+N Toggle pilot names above

their planes

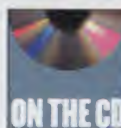
SHIFT+F Fire flare

SHIFT+M Toggle bullet type

CONTROL+S Toggle air show smoke

SOLD OUT SPECIAL

As well as the usual new demos, we've got three golden oldies for you: *Hind*, *Worms* and *World Rally Fever*. Courtesy of Sold Out, you can buy these and others for the pauperishly low sum of £4.99.



PATCHES

Get even more out of the games you already own. We've raided the Net and harangued the publishers to bring you all the latest and finest patches

Battlezone 1.4

Incorporates all previous fixes and includes anti-cheating measures and DirectX 6.0 bug fixes.

Colin McRae Rally (European release fix)

Updated .exe for Codemasters' little gem.

Diablo 1.07

Fixes Black Death crash, Hidden Shrine lock-up, portacalling problems and more.

Dominion: Storm Over Gift 3 1.0 to 1.2

Staggered vehicle collision detection to reduce lag. Four players max for TCP/IP.

Dominion: Storm Over Gift 3 1.1 to 1.2

As above, but for users who have upgraded to 1.1.

Flesh Feast 1.02

Fixes bug where pump-action shotgun did not fire in Strategic mode.

Great Battles Of Alexander 1.3

Improves gameplay and fixes vanishing rivers and some multiplayer issues.

Great Battles Of Caesar 1.1

Fixes a few known bugs.

iFA-18E Carrier Strike

Fighter 1.2

Addresses some issues found in earlier versions.

International Cricket

Captain 1.34

Various minor bug fixes included with this patch.

Medieval 1.04

Fixes route indicator bug.

Panzer Commander 1.0 to 1.2c

Part 1 of 2-part patch.

Panzer Commander 1.1 to 1.2

Fixes weapons, AI, key commands, vehicular 'bounce' and more!

Quake I & II (optimised OpenGL driver)

Third party-made speed-optimised 3dfxgl.dll.

Rage Of Mages 1.1

Fixes some problems in Microids' *Rage Of Mages*.

Rainbow Six 1.03a

Addresses a few single- and multiplayer issues.

Seven Kingdoms Ancient Adversaries 2.12

Addresses some issues found in earlier versions.

StarCraft 1.03

This patch adds a few new features and several bug fixes.

Warbirds 2.0 to 2.5

Upgrades so you can play on IMOL Server. Now with new planes!

Warbirds 2.5 Video Fix

Fixes a glitch found in some graphics cards with v2.5.

Warbirds Hi-Res Artwork for 2.5

Cockpit artwork for existing and new planes in *Warbirds*. Essential!

Xenocracy 2.0

Fixes some problems with the Xenocracy network game.

AN APOLOGY

Again we failed to get the *KlIngon: Honour Guard* demo for this month - it still isn't ready. Secondly, due to lead times we missed getting the final two episodes of *Wing Commander: Secret Ops* on this issue's cover disc. Fingers crossed for next month....

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EXTENDED PLAY



Don't stick that box of games in the loft! We've got the best hacks, the nattiest cracks and every cool tool you need to get more from the games you already own

WORDS Phil Wand

TRY IT YOURSELF



On this month's cover CD we've got all the official patches, bug fixes, utilities and map editors we could find, including all the ones mentioned in these pages. To track them down, use the CD browser to go to the Patches section. All the patches are listed with a brief description and any relevant documentation. Make sure you read any associated README files for information on how to install individual patches. For further help, turn to our CD pages, starting on page 194.

“Eraser Bot is a merciless killing machine that runs around with the specific intention of shooting you a second arsehole”

Another file-packed episode for you this month, with 15Mb of game tweaks grafted on to the cover disc by our team of resident neurosurgeons. Today's menu includes an hors d'oeuvre of *Eraser Bot* for *Quake II*, followed by a main course of close to 40 *Battlezone* maps. A scrum-a-dumptious *Worms* pudding rounds things off nicely, before you slink off to the lounge for a strong coffee (served in one of those annoyingly titchy cups with a handle you can't get your fingers into), some yummy Belgian chocs and a couple of tumour-strength Marlboro. Mmm. But let's head on back to reality and get on with the 'stuff'.



"If I stand, like, really still, maybe they won't see me."

BATTLEZONE

More maps for the real-time strategy arcade blast

Activision's landmark *Battlezone* (PCZ #62, 81%) helped nourish four peculiarly American obsessions: wicked communists, big tanks, big guns, and Uncle

Sam saving the universe. To do this the developers contrived one of the most eccentric plots in home entertainment history, where commie bastards are using

alien technology to take over the world. From a base on Mars. Back in the '50s. *Battlezone* shot straight to the top of the chart and stayed there for yonks.

The following set of *Battlezone* maps are designed for deathmatching only.

★ **BASERAID** (baseraid.zip) features an abandoned NSDF base. The scene is set for a monster battle with truckloads of guns, tanks and loud explosions.

★ **BATTLE ARENA** (battlearena.zip) is a small map designed for non-stop play. All weapon, ammunition and repair power-ups regenerate within five seconds.

★ **BATTLEFIELD** (battlefld.zip) is a medium-size map with a good deal of varied terrain. It supports up to eight players maximum and includes assorted power-ups.

★ **BUNKER** (Bunker.zip) is an average deathmatch map featuring a whole array of defensive positions and dugouts.

★ **CARNIVAL** (Carnival.zip) is a basic deathmatch map, though the author has modified two geysers to work as volcanoes. So watch out for the earthquakes.

★ **DEVIL'S FALLS** (devilfal.zip), like Carnival,

QUAKE II

Eraser makes you sniffle for your mum like a big girl

Developed to be fast, smart and really rather uncharitable, Ryan Feltrin's infamous Eraser Bot is a 'simulated multiplayer opponent' for *Quake II*. In other words, it's a merciless killing machine that runs around with the specific intention of shooting you a second arsehole. It's capable of learning any map simply by monitoring your movements, so once you fire up a new level and begin finding your way around, things start to get hot

pretty quickly. The bot also supports the popular *Capture The Flag* patch and can be set to play hired gun in your team games. If you think you're hard enough, you can also spawn an entire squad of the deranged tossers and go head to head against them with some friends.

Eraser comes with four different skill settings, ranging from zero (pansy) to three (ex-asylum veteran with nine fragmeister stripes and a 'Macca

Drinks Men' badge on his tree-trunk biceps). Unless you're the kind of hard bastard who likes to point and laugh during episodes of *Animal Hospital*, go for the easy setting first – until you get used to the way the bot 'thinks' (hell, yes, it really does seem to have a mind of its own), you'll only end up with your cellular matter smeared across walls, floors and other players. By default, bots alter their skill dynamically as they play, which means you end up with a longer, more enjoyable game. What happens here is that each time you get wiped out, the bot reduces its skill by one. Each time you wipe it out, the level gets



Dramatic Eraser Bot group shot in front of a power station.

features volcanoes and seismic activity, though in this instance they're used to guard the more beefy power-ups.

★ **DEEP IMPACT** (Dlmpact.zip) is based on the kosher Europa map. Not only do you have to avoid incoming enemy shells, you also have to avoid meteor showers.

★ **FIREROCK** (FireRock.zip) is based around the Titan scenery and hosts up to eight players. Good defensive positions.

★ **HAIDES** (Haides.zip) lets rip with a Day Wrecker every 60 seconds. Which is, er, entertaining. For the first 60 seconds.

★ **KABOOM!!** (kaboom.zip) describes itself as "crazy". Like Haides, a bomb goes off at regular intervals. You also find a Golem and Sasquatch meandering about every two minutes.

★ **RAVE RACE!** (RaveRace.zip) is a deathmatch with a difference. The host machine pauses until all players are in tanks at the start.

★ **MOON 2077** (Moon2077.zip) is a nicely designed, poorly documented map with many crates and four platforms smack bang in the centre.

★ **MOONLIGHT SONATA** (moonlite.zip) is a medium-sized map based around the Moon terrain. Much of the region is very intricate and makes for good deathmatch.

★ **RAMPAGE!** (Rampage.zip) supports up to four players and is on the small size. Features crystalline artefacts, the Mars face, a Mayan temple and a crystal fortress. Recommended.

★ **RIDGE OF DOOM** (ridge.zip) is a well-designed deathmatch map suitable for up to eight players. Look for power-ups in the north and south ravines.

★ **STRIKE AT THE HEART** (strike.zip) is one of the larger

maps here, with plenty of spare power-ups, ammunition and scout tanks to keep you amused. Supports eight players.

★ **VALLEY OF THORNS** (vothorns.zip) is a small and straightforward arena crammed with juicy power-ups. Watch out for the spikes and low-visibility areas. Supports eight players, but two can have just as much fun.

The following set of Battlezone maps are designed for strategic and/or alliance play.

★ **SLINGSHOT MAPS** (Slingshot.zip) is a collection of six maps by Battlezone design supremos Toni Chaffin and J D Houser. All maps are well-documented, beautifully presented and, importantly, include custom objects and craft.

★ **4-CORNERS** (4corners.zip) is a small alliance map based around the low terrain and designed for between two and four players.

★ **BUNKER HILL** (bunkrhl.zip) is designed for two players. There's a large impassable ridge that runs along the spine of the map, but you can go around the edges or climb to the top and hold position.

★ **HIGHLAND SEIGE** (Highland.zip) features mountainous terrain with a fortress in each corner of the

arena corresponding to the four starting points.

★ **LUNAR FLATS** (lunarflats.zip) is a good Moon map, ideal for teams, and provides a healthy number of resources.

★ **MEAN GREEN** (meangren.zip) provides a good, medium-size strategic arena for up to four players. Scrap count is high, and there are six geysers for each player.

★ **PAC-MAN!** (pacman.zip) is another medium-size, four-player strategy map. Based on Titan.

★ **PLATEAUS** (Plateaus.zip) is designed for alliances, and is suitable for two to four players.

★ **EUROPEAN ST. HELENS** (StHelens.zip) is a large strategic arena for between two and five players. The terrain map was created from elevation maps of Mount St Helens after its eruption.

★ **VULCAN WAR GODS** (Vulcan2.zip) sees up to four players fighting on and around an active volcano. Many geysers and plenty of scrap.

★ *If you'd like to create your own maps, simply unzip the contents of bzhelip.zip on the CD-ROM. Inside you'll find Toni Chaffin's comprehensive guide in Windows help format – recommended reading for any Battlezone fan.*

A LOAD OF OLD HYPERLINKS

If all these game power-ups give you a tingle in your dongle, keep an eye on the following websites for the very latest versions

Quake II Eraser Bot <http://impact.frag.com/>

Eraser Bot Mods and Skins <http://frag.com/erased/>

Quake II Capture The Flag

<ftp://ftp.idsoftware.com/idstuff/quake2/ctf/q2ctf102.exe>

Viewable Weapons Patch

http://brentagon.intelegenesi.com/quake2/vwep_pak.zip

Slingshot Battlezone Maps www.slingshot.mcmill.com/

Battlezone Maps www.missionyard.com/battlezone/nmaps.shtml

Worms 2 Business <http://worms2.gamestats.com/>



WORMS 2

★ **Utilities and mods for Team 17's wriggly wormfest**

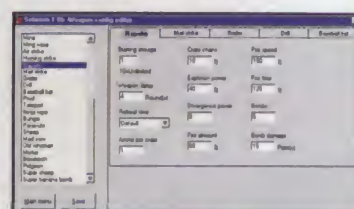
Not sure why, but whenever there's a group of people gathered round a monitor or a TV, *Worms* is one of the games that always gets dragged out of the cupboard. I guess it's down to the fact that you can let everyone join in on the one screen, and don't have to arse around with multiple PCs, network cables and obscure Windows protocol dialogs. It's a worthy game to boot, and even girls know how to play it.

★ **DEVIL'S FALLS WORMS 2 OPTION EDITOR** (optEdit.zip) is a quick little window on some of the game's settings and limits. This ranges from setting 'boring' stuff like the default time limit for rounds, to 'slightly interesting' stuff like the strength of the wind. If you're after a more comprehensive utility, try *Setworm* instead.

★ **SETWORM** (Setworm.zip) gives *Worms* owners the chance to change pretty much every aspect of the game, from

the explosive power of napalm, to the number of landmines on each level. Recommended.

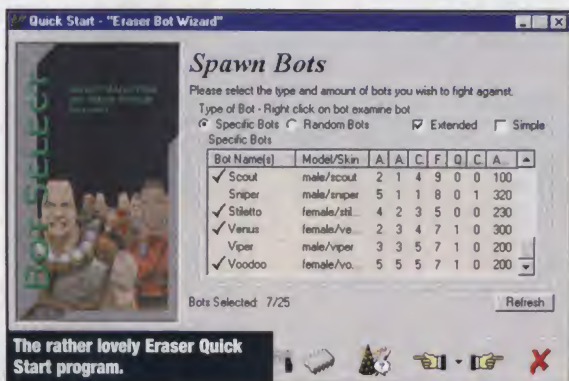
★ **SFX CONVERTER** (sfxconv.zip) enables you to convert the game's SFX files.



Setworm: frig around with any of the game's many weapons and power-ups.

★ **EFFECTS EDITOR** (w2effect.zip) provides the same sort of functionality as the *Worms 2 Soundbank Editor*. Use it to copy and arrange the files in the Effects sub-directory.

★ **SPRITE SWAPPER** (w2swap.zip) enables you to associate any one sprite with another. Great for when you're drunk, but otherwise it's just too darn silly.



pushed back up again. Simple, but clever. And brilliant.

To install the bot, just double-click on the executable file

(Eraser101_Full.exe), specify your *Quake II* folder, and then hit the Unzip button. And that's it. To run the game with *Eraser*, locate the

Eraser & Quick Start folder on your Start Menu, then click on the Quick Start icon.

The gorgeous *Eraser* launch program enables you to configure everything before finally kicking off a *Quake II* session. This includes setting which type of the game you want to play, which map you want to play on, how many bots you want, and which game flags you want to toggle (eg infinite ammo, friendly fire and so on). But it doesn't stop there. You can examine all 25 bots together and what they look like – not static poses, mind, but fluid animations that you can pan, zoom and control with the mouse;

set teams; set how the maps cycle; set how aggressive the bots are. It's really quite good.

As ever, the best way to get the hang of the thing is to play it and play it and play it. There are a whole load of peachy little features that'll have you nailing your eyelids to your eyebrows for just one more game. Such as the way Erasers chat and insult you; or the way they can crouch, climb, jump and use any weapon – same as you can; they can use buttons, lifts and platforms; they detest all carbon-based life forms; and most importantly, they hate you. [X]



Duncan Goodhew!
Can I have your autograph?

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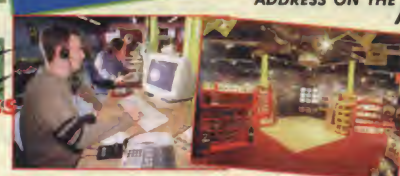
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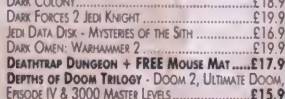


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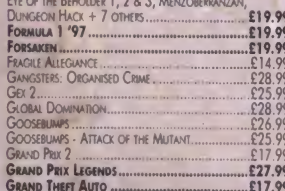


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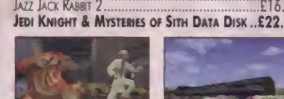
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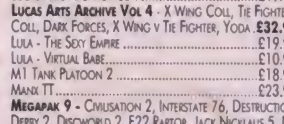


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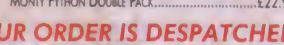


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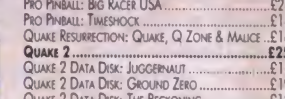
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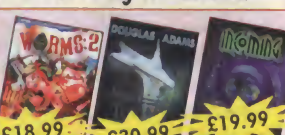
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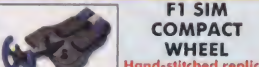
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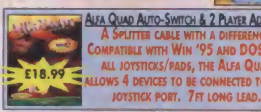
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"The offside trap beat us and..."



"Hasta la vista, Mr Billox..."



Ministry of Quake: frag on down!



King of the hill: world champion and "bloody nice chap" Thresh. Obviously, there's more to life than Quake.

THRESH FRAG FEST

Warren Christmas reports from the grand finals of Wireplay's Quakeadelica tournament

It's 1.15am on a Friday morning in the main room at the Ministry of Sound (a classy, world-famous nightclub or an overhyped dump, depending on who you talk to) in Elephant & Castle (the absolute arse end of South London, no matter what anyone says). The DJ, who we're assured is quite well known (although no one we speak to can actually name him), is spinning the summer Ibiza anthem 'Music Sounds Better With You' by

Stardust. There are eight people in the room; only two of them – almost certainly drunk – are dancing. And the bar staff are looking very, very bored.

The masses, you see, are in the large back room of the club, foregoing the chance to shake their arses on the dancefloor, neck drinks and trade conversation with members of the opposite sex – the kind of thing you might reasonably expect people to do in the club. Instead they are watching a computer game. But this isn't any old computer game. Oh no. On the giant screen is a *Quake II* deathmatch, and it's the grand final of Wireplay's Quakeadelica tournament (co-sponsored by AMD, with

support from Diamond, BT Internet, blah, blah, blah). Woo-hoo!

Playing (rather bizarrely) from a backstage position half out of sight is Thresh (aka Dennis Fong), currently the world's finest *Quake* player, flown over from the States by the sponsors especially for the event. This is the man who everybody wants to hate (I mean, over \$200,000 plus a Ferrari earned just from playing computer games?!). But who is actually a bloody nice chap. In the real world, at least. And the hapless challenger? Billox (aka James Page), a 21-year old from Surrey and the newly crowned Wireplay UK champion.

To call the 20-minute final

'quite close' would be a little like describing England's 3-0 victory over Luxembourg the previous night as a 'right good thrashing' – ie just plain wrong. Thresh finishes the game with 56 (that's *fifty-six*) frags. Billox ends with... none. In fact he finishes on minus one thanks to a suicide (accidental, we think) late on in the game.

With a prize pot of £2000 at stake, and a mass of journalists and photographers plus a TV crew in attendance – not to mention a hugely partisan crowd of 200 or so, whipped into a nationalistic frenzy vaguely reminiscent of the Nuremberg rallies (kind of) by co-hosts Jo Guest and 'that other bloke' from



Dressed to frag: co-host Jo Guest.

Wireplay THE Quakeadelica CYBERWARRIORS



Billox
Real name: James Page
Age: 21
From: Farnham, Surrey
Scores: 1st round 25;
2nd round 15;
3rd/4th round 13
Final position: UK winner



Loper
Real name: John Donnelly
Age: 20
From: Edinburgh
Scores: 1st round 18; 2nd round 15; 3rd/4th round 8
Final position: UK runner-up



[NL] Mrs Paddock
Real name: Jonathan Burr
Age: 25
From: Northampton
Scores: 1st round 24;
2nd round 13
Final position: 3rd



[NL] Spider
Real name: Ben Shoesmith
Age: 18
From: Burgess Hill, Sussex
Scores: 1st round 23;
2nd round 9
Final position: 4th



DeadMode
Real name: Dominic Winter
Age: 27
From: Liverpool
Score: 1st round 16
Final position: 5th



Sitting Duck
Real name: Mark Williamson
Age: 21
From: York
Score: 1st round 13
Final position: 6th



U-Jay
Real name: John Holder
Age: 20
From: Crowborough, Sussex
Score: 1st round 9
Final position: 7th



[TNC] Nimrod
Real name: Simon Aicken
Age: 23
From: Bangor, N Ireland
Score: 1st round 6
Final position: 8th

GamesMaster – some players may well have opted for suicide a little earlier.

The combatants were, in fairness, competing on Thresh's favourite level, Q2DM1 (he refused to play on anything else), and not surprisingly the Californian knows it inside out. Reacting to the somewhat naive audible clues from his opponent (slashes in the water, for example), and typically armed with quad-damage and a rail- or chain-gun, he pounced on his opponent relentlessly, killing him time and time again with some considerable ease. "But Thresh is not shooting at anything," said someone standing next to me, just before Billox came into view to 'eat' one of the rockets. It was, to be perfectly honest, bloody embarrassing.

Still, having beating seven other UK finalists (see 'Cyberwarriors' panel above) over four knockout heats on the night, from an original

183 who had fought out the preliminaries on Wireplay, 'our boy' Billox had done well to even get there. What's more, he walked away with flight tickets to watch the AMD Professional Gamers League finals in New York. Oh, and a Diamond Monster 3D II graphics accelerator. Your correspondent just walked away drunk. **FW**

Want to see Thresh in action for yourself? You'll find Quake II demos recorded during the event at www.quakeadelica.com/.



Cup tied: UK champ Billox.

WHAT IS WIREPLAY?

IT'S A GAMES NETWORK

Wireplay is a games network from BT which enables you to meet and compete with other gamers from all over the UK. All the software you need to get going is available free by calling freephone 0800 800918 (give 'em your details and you'll be sent a free CD) or from www.wireplay.com/uk/downloads.

2 WAYS 2 PAY

There are two ways of paying for your time. The Pay As You Play option costs 2.5p a minute off-peak and 6p a minute during peak hours. Frequent players can use the Subscription service, which costs £9.95 a month or £99.50 a year, with all calls then charged at local rates at all times.

WIREPLAY CHARTS



MID-OCTOBER 1998

Quake and its sequel are still the most-played games on Wireplay, but will they remain there into the new year with the likes of *SIN*, *Half-Life* and *Populous: The Beginning* all said to be on their way to the service? Meanwhile, bridge is still holding off poker on the Mindgames channel, and *MUD II* (yawn) remains ahead of office favourite *Age Of Empires*.

GAME WORLDS CHANNEL

- 1 Quake II
- 2 Quake
- 3 Air Attack
- 4 MUD II
- 5 Unreal

RAPID PLAY CHANNEL

- 1 MUD II
- 2 Age Of Empires
- 3 Duke Nukem 3D
- 4 Red Alert
- 5 Total Annihilation

MIND GAMES CHANNEL

- 1 Bridge
- 2 Poker
- 3 Cribbage
- 4 Chess
- 5 Reversi

FROM THE WIRES

A new two-verses-two *QUAKE* league has been set up by Wireplay regulars [TGH]Abards and [KT]Quad. The two-man team format makes it ideal for new players. If you're interested in joining, email abards@lineone.net or visit the website at <http://website.lineone.net/~abards/wp2v2league/>.

Fans of *QUAKE II*'s Capture The Flag can find a new Advanced CTF server on Wireplay with three brand new maps (which are, of course, available from www.wireplay.co.uk/downloads/quake/quake2_w.htm). Another new mod for the game, King Of The Hill, has also been added. The 5.5Mb download is available from www.wireplay.co.uk/downloads/quake/.

Wireplay now supports version 2.17 of *UNREAL* to offer smoother gameplay. The 1.8Mb patch is available at <http://unrealnation.gameaholic.com>.

Shhhhh! News reaches us that *POPULOUS: THE BEGINNING* (PCZ #70, 92%) should be supported on Wireplay within the next few weeks. Nothing is official yet, but watch www.wireplay.co.uk for more details. Also likely to be added soon, incidentally, are *SIN* (PCZ #70, 91%) and *Half-Life* (see review on page 88).

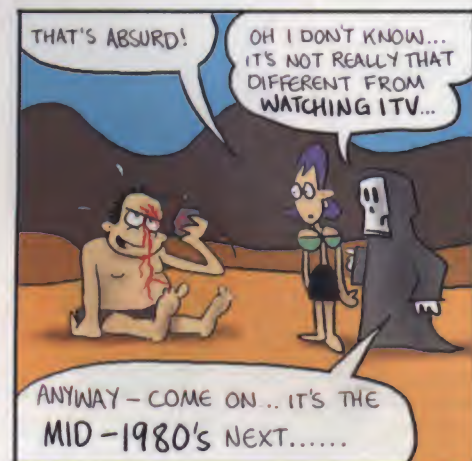
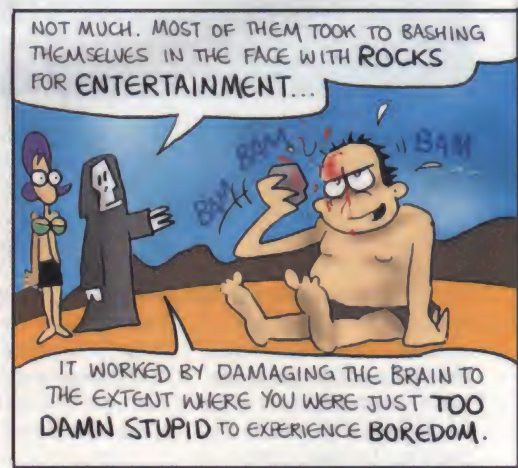
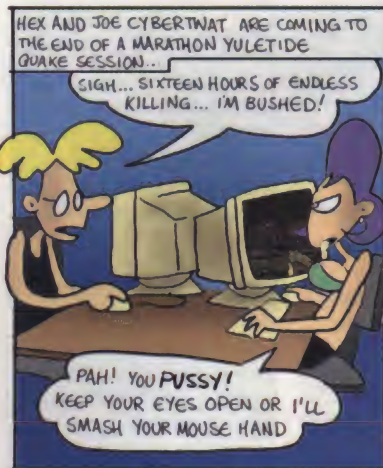
WIREPLAY GAMES

Wireplay have begun their build-up to Christmas by adding support for the fabby *F-22 Total Air War* (PCZ #68, 95%) from DID/Infogrames. Hurrah! If there's a particular game you'd like to see added to the roster, visit www.wireplay.co.uk/news/poll.html to vote, or email suggestions to wirenews@wireplay.com. Here are some of the best games currently supported on the service...

- Actua Golf 2
- Actua Soccer 2
- Air Attack
- Age Of Empires (inc trial version)
- Armored Fist 2
- Backgammon
- Big Red Racing (inc Wireplay Edition)
- Blood (inc shareware v1.1)
- Command & Conquer
- Comanche 3
- Dark Omen
- Daytona Deluxe (inc demo)
- Descent/Descent 2 (inc demo)
- Doom (v1.9)/Doom II/Ultimate Doom
- Doom Shareware (v1.666)
- Duke Nukem 3D
- EF2000: Wireplay Edition
- Extreme Assault
- F-22 ADF
- F/A-18 Korea
- Final Liberation
- Formula Karts
- Forsaken (inc demo)
- Fragile Allegiance
- G-Name
- Incubation
- Jedi Knight (inc MOTS)
- Microsoft Flight Sim '98
- Monster Truck Madness 2
- MS Cart Precision Racing (inc demo)
- MUD II
- NASCAR 2
- NetMech
- Outwars
- Plane Crazy
- Quake/Quake II
- Red Alert (inc Counterstrike/Aftermath)
- Redneck Rampage
- Shadow Warrior (inc shareware)
- Sid Meier's Gettysburg
- Star Wars Supremacy
- Terminal Velocity
- Total Annihilation
- Unreal
- Uprising
- Various card and board games
- Virtua Fighter 2 (inc demo)
- Virtual Pool/Virtual Pool 2
- Virtual Snooker
- WarCraft 2 (inc demo)



Wireplay
The games network from BT



MY GOD!! THIS IS COMPLETE RUBBISH!!

THAT'S BECAUSE WAY BACK THEN GAMES MAGAZINES WERE WRITTEN BY LOSERS, MISFITS, AND IMBECILES. QUITE THE OPPOSITE OF TODAY.

WOW SPECTRUM

In this month's WOW Spectrum...

Brian Bonkers!
Move over Jet Set Willy -- BRIAN BONNKERS is here!!! We take a look at the fab new game from Stanthorpe Technologies!!! It's like having an arcade machine in your bedroom!!! Check out this **ACTUAL SCREENSHOT**:

SCORE: 40

PLAYER 1

World Exclusive!
We bring you the **FRST EVER** review of CottageSoft's long-awaited adventure game, **QUEST FOR MERLIN'S RUNES!!!** Apart from incredible **GRAPHICS** the game also features the most sophisticated **TEXT PARSER** we've ever seen!!! You can construct complexated sentences such like "Go N then get rope then go S then look at orc then use axe on orc"... and the game **CAN UNDERSTAND IT ALL!!!**

Free games!!!
Just carefully type in a few thousand lines of **BASIC** and awy you go!!! Thismonth: an **AMAZING** version of **FROGER** featuring moving "sprites"!!!

Into the future...
In another **WORLD EXCLUSIVE**, we unveil the micro you dreamt about in your dreams -- the new **SINCLAIR QL!!!** Plus: **Microdrives**: the super-reliable storage format of tomorrow!!! All this and much much more in the greatest games magazine of the **CENTURY -- WOWSPECTRUM!!!**

SHEESH! LOOK HERE, IVE HAD ENOUGH OF THE PAST... CAN'T WE GO FORWARD IN TIME?

SURE YOU SEE, I COVER FOR THE SPIRIT OF GAMING FUTURE... ON A SORT OF FREELANCE BASIS TWO DAYS A WEEK. LET'S ROLL!

AND... BUH? I DON'T GET IT... WHAT'S GOING ON?

IT'S THE YEAR 2048 AND THEY'RE PLAYING SWINGBALL

SWINGBALL?! THIS IS THE FUTURE OF GAMING?!

THAT'S RIGHT. SEE, AFTER THE MILLENNIUM BUG WIPED OUT HALF THE PLANET'S COMPUTER SYSTEMS, PEOPLE LOST FAITH IN THE "DIGITAL REVOLUTION" ENTIRELY...

CONSEQUENTLY, SWINGBALL'S YOUR LOT, I'M AFRAID. THAT OR LAWN DARTS

SO THE MORAL OF ALL THIS IS THAT AS FAR AS GAMING GOES, THE LATE NINETIES ARE AS GOOD AS IT GETS...

YUP!

WELL THEN... TAKE ME BACK THERE -- AND FAST!

BACK? OH... ER... I FORGOT TO MENTION THAT, DIDN'T I? I CAN'T TAKE YOU BACK

WHAT!?

SAFETY REGULATIONS. SORRY. LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE STUCK HERE

AND... GIVE US A GO ON THAT ROCK WILL YOU? THIS THING'S STARTING TO GET ON MY TITS.

BUHHHH...

BAM! BAM! BAM!

the "end"

full.monty@demon

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THE LIONHEAD DIARIES



Continuing our insider's view of the making of *Black And White*, the first game from new developers Lionhead

★ WORDS Steve Jackson



Creating soft edges: from no lighting to basic lighting and finally to dynamic shadows, which move convincingly over everything.

WORKING TOGETHER

The creation of the incredibly complex beast that is *Black And White* is in the hands of three programming teams: the game programmers create the artificial intelligence routines and the statistical databases which will ultimately determine how the game plays and balances; the artists design the look of the game by creating thousands of graphical building blocks from which the landscapes, creatures and animations can be built; and the

3D engine programmers have the unenviable task of integrating the two.

Technically, engine programming is the most complex part of the equation. Our three engine programmers, Jean-Claude Cottier, Scawen Roberts and Alex Evans beaver away until one day they sit back and, voilà, the game can suddenly do something amazing that it couldn't do before.

Recently, Scawen showed us a routine he had written which not only enabled our test bed lion creature to move round the world in 3D, but also to direct its attention towards specified objects. So as the creature ran forwards, its eyes remained focused on the building it was running past.

I haven't a clue how the engine programmers do what they do. During the summer we took on Alex Evans, a brilliant young demo code programmer from Cambridge University. This is his layman's guide to the development of the B&W game engine. Take it away, Alex...

The B&W engine was a daunting task. When I arrived at Lionhead, Jean-Claude had already set up a landscape system which used blended textures to give a truly organic feel. Jean-Claude had a grand vision for what the landscape should be able to do. Every house in every village had to have a unique garden; as the towns got more advanced, so roads would begin to appear; as the gamer played the game, the ground would morph and change to reflect the style of play – cracked, parched land for evil wizards, or beautiful, lush vegetation for the goodies.

Jean-Claude found a way to generate a unique texture for every square inch of the ground, enabling it to reflect all sorts of terrain – from the dunes of Egypt, to the grassy hills of Ireland or the snowy peaks of the Alps. Being a perfectionist, he's developed a new way of drawing water with a 3D card. This means beautiful, glistening lakes, and tiny, pixel-perfect ripples lapping at the coastline. The kind of detailed work that went into the landscape – scudding clouds casting shadows, or rocky cliff faces covered with tiny pebbles – is what working for Lionhead is all about.

While JC slaved on the landscape, I set to work getting some of the artists' buildings and creatures into the game world. I also had to create soft edges to

move dynamically over all the objects in the world. This added greatly to the realism, as the sequence (above) shows. The first has no lighting at all, the next only basic, while the final one has soft, dynamic shadows which move convincingly over everything in the game.

Scawen, the third member of the engine department (who joined recently from a courier company called Black And White – freaky!), took on the enormous task of creating the creature, its animation, and all the movement of the smaller creatures in the world. Scawen was able to build up a skeletal system which he applied to every moving thing. A textured skin is then stretched over the moving skeleton, giving the final visual result: a convincing character moving in almost any conceivable way. Scawen's 'bone system' is unique in that it adapts automatically to changes in each creature's environment, or even its physique: creatures learn how to walk up hills, to limp if they are hurt, or hunch and double up if they are evil. The three screenshots (below left) show different lions, all created and animated automatically by the bone system. The first is fat, the next evil, and the final one a towering giant. Each one has its own characteristic way of moving. In the end, Internet gamers will hopefully be able to battle against others with their


own unique war-torn creatures.

Working on the engine has been a joy. A lot of what we're doing has never been done before, and each new step gives us all a great buzz. We've managed to separate out the work so that we're not always treading on each other's toes, but wires somehow get crossed no matter how hard you try. Exploding creatures, 30-foot rabbits or floating heads twisting into menacing talons are all regular visitors to our end of the office.

"Alex! What have you done?" Jean-Claude will yell.

"Nothing! It was Scawen!" comes the reply.

"Rubbish!" protests Scawen. "I don't know anything about a cow with a two-inch head and a 40-foot hoof! Blame the artists!"

Poor old artists, eh? That's where the buck always stops. 

“A lot of what we're doing has never been done before. It's a great buzz”

ALEX EVANS, GAME ENGINE PROGRAMMER

★ As well as being a director for start-up games developer Lionhead, Steve Jackson is co-founder of Games Workshop, author of *Fighting Fantasy* Gamebooks, and columnist for *The Daily Telegraph*.

★ The next part follows in next month's issue, out Tuesday 15 December.



These three lions were created and animated automatically by the 'bone system' to make one that is fat, one that is evil and one that is a towering giant.

As engine programmer Alex has to integrate the artists' scenery and creatures with the AI, gameplay and so on.

SICKNOTES



Roll up, roll up. It's time to wallow in a mire of nihilistic filth, boys and girls! Hurrah for Sick Notes, the letters page for knuckleheads, fools, angry, shuddering failures... and you

★ **LOWEST FORM OF WITTERING** Charlie Brooker

SICK NOTES WANTS YOUR LETTERS

We have announced our campaign against the genuinely stupid who must be destroyed (see Loser Of The Month), and it's time for you to do your bit. We want your suggestions on how best to ensnare and discomfort the UK's biggest fools. Send ideas, diagrams, fully comprehensive battle plans etc to us in our bunker. The best suggestion wins some money. And a poke in the eye with a dirty twig. And exemption from our database. Get scribbling, you crazy kids!

WRITE TO Sick Notes, PC ZONE, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ

EMAIL letters.pczone@dennis.co.uk
With the subject heading 'Sick Notes'

WORD ASSOCIATION

I am writing to ask if anyone else has noticed something about savegames – or, more importantly, how people name them. I looked at how my friends save when they're playing alone, and it's amazing what you can tell about a person from this. For example, if someone really thinks they're 'it', they type things like 'I am the hardest f**ker alive.' But it's a different story when you're watching. All of a sudden your friend's colourful use of ego-boosting expletives changes to writer's block (they feel a twat with you stood there watching). We're all guilty of it.

I have concluded that inside each of us lurks a little

Please tell me that I'm not the only person to have noticed this.

Dave Garden, Fleetwood

★ You're not the only person to have noticed this. Savegame psychology may be in its infancy, but it sounds like a valid science to me. Personally, I favour the hurried approach – my savegames always have names like 'fhghfghfghf', which is easy to type if you're impatient, but a pain in the arse later when you're trying to work out which save is which. This suggests that I'm impatient and disorganised. And whaddya know? I am.

Still, you should only really worry if you start calling them things like 'I love Alice Beer'. Or 'Transmissions from Mars urge me to kill. What? Who said that? Show yourself. SHOW YOURSELF!'

SHORT BUT SHITE

How does Charlie Brooker expect people to write in to him when he only slags them off and picks holes in their letters afterwards?

'MooGoat', email

★ Haven't you noticed? Only the genuinely stupid who must be destroyed write to this page. And now that includes you. (See Loser Of The Month.)

OVERSTEPPING THE MARK

Not content with earning your living writing game reviews, you've now got the chance to do Sick Notes, a feature which is akin to beating a small, blind, handcuffed paraplegic boy with a large iron bar.

Anon, email

★ It is? Cool!

LOSER OF THE MONTH

You can be a loser and also a winner – of £50

THE GAME'S AFOOT

It appears that your provocatively obscene Sick Notes has been encouraging thick people from all over the country to write to you thinking you will lay down and die if they insult you hard enough. I would ask you (nicely, now) to stop this, as there are dangerous levels of psyched-up dullards gathering in the suburbs. Cheers.

HLector465@aol.com

★ You're absolutely right. The standard of letters we receive for this page was woefully low from the outset, but in recent months things seem to have taken a turn for the worse. Originally conceived as a relatively upbeat page full of stinging banter, Sick Notes has rapidly degenerated into a ceaseless parade of attention-seeking simpletons poking their gurning faces over the parapet and begging to be abused. Which suits our purposes fine. The fact is, we've been collecting their addresses for some time now. Each time a bona fide moron sends us a message, we simply add whatever contact details we can glean from it to our list. Result: an ever-growing compendium of complete dunces.

If we so chose, we could make a fortune selling this information on to marketing companies who pay top whack for mailing lists. Got some dodgy timeshares to flog but can't find anyone dumb enough to bite? Check out our database. Need some brainless loudmouths to appear on your daytime television debate show? We've got hundreds. Seeking human guinea pigs for a transparently dangerous genital cauterisation experiment? Hey, the gang's all here...

That would be one course of action. But we're not going to sell their addresses. Oh no. We're going to do something far more sensible. We're going to have these people killed.

This is stage one in the war, ladies and gentlemen. The war against stupid people. We're not talking about the slow of mind, the silly or the backward, we're talking about the nation's arseholes in all their many forms. These are the ones who ruin it for the rest of us. The ones who watch too much TV and believe what they read in the tabloids. The ones who bray their dull opinions in your ear without invitation. The ones who watch *Noel's House Party*. The ones who... well, they're just twats, that's all. And we're going to track them all down and cave their skulls in with hammers. After all, we know where they live.

So, to recap: if you're an idiot who wants his head smashed open, send us a rubbish letter. And the rest of you can join our army. We've got a badge for you to cut out and wear and everything. All you need now is a hammer and access to our database. Patience, my pretties. Patience...

“Sick Notes is akin to beating a small, blind, handcuffed paraplegic boy with a large iron bar”

ANONYMOUS

psychologist. When someone else checks out the names of your savegames, this little psychologist kicks in and they can see what an egomaniac pleb you really are.



With reference to the Loser Of The Month panel, here's nice badge for you to cut out, stick on to a piece of cardboard or plastic, and wear with pride.

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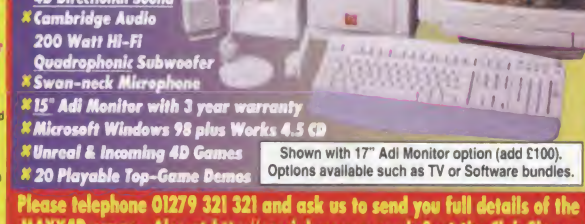
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